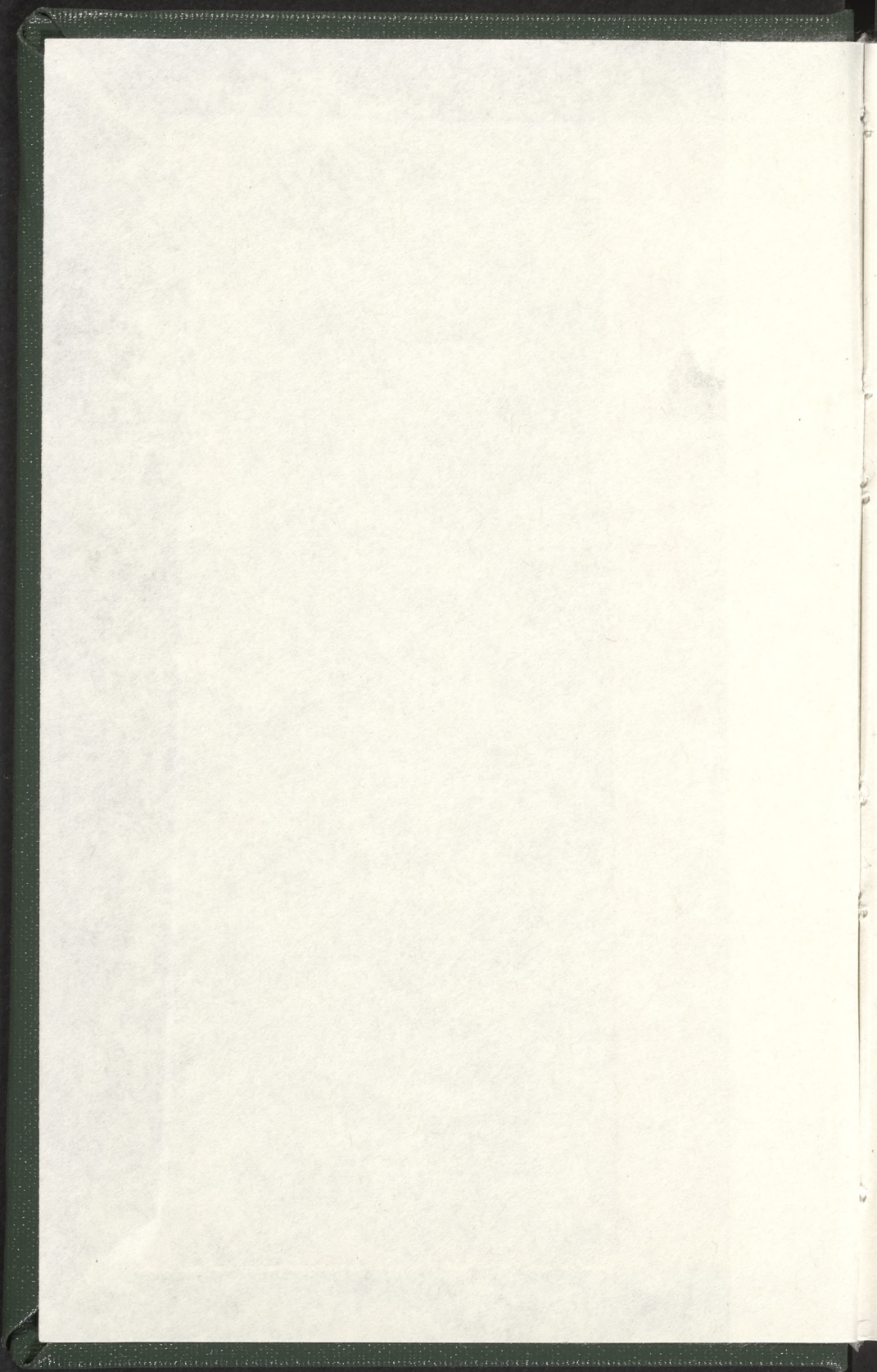
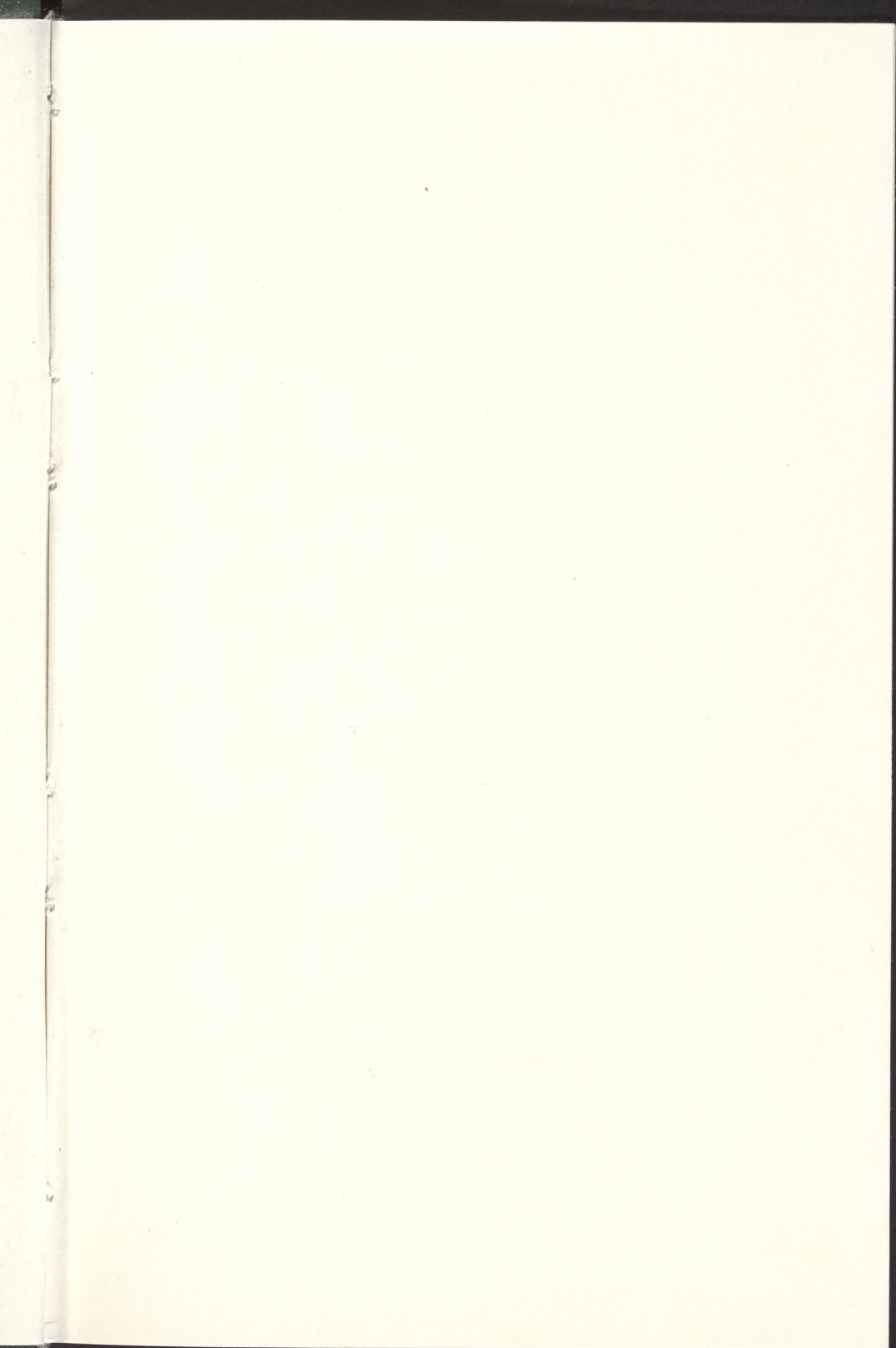
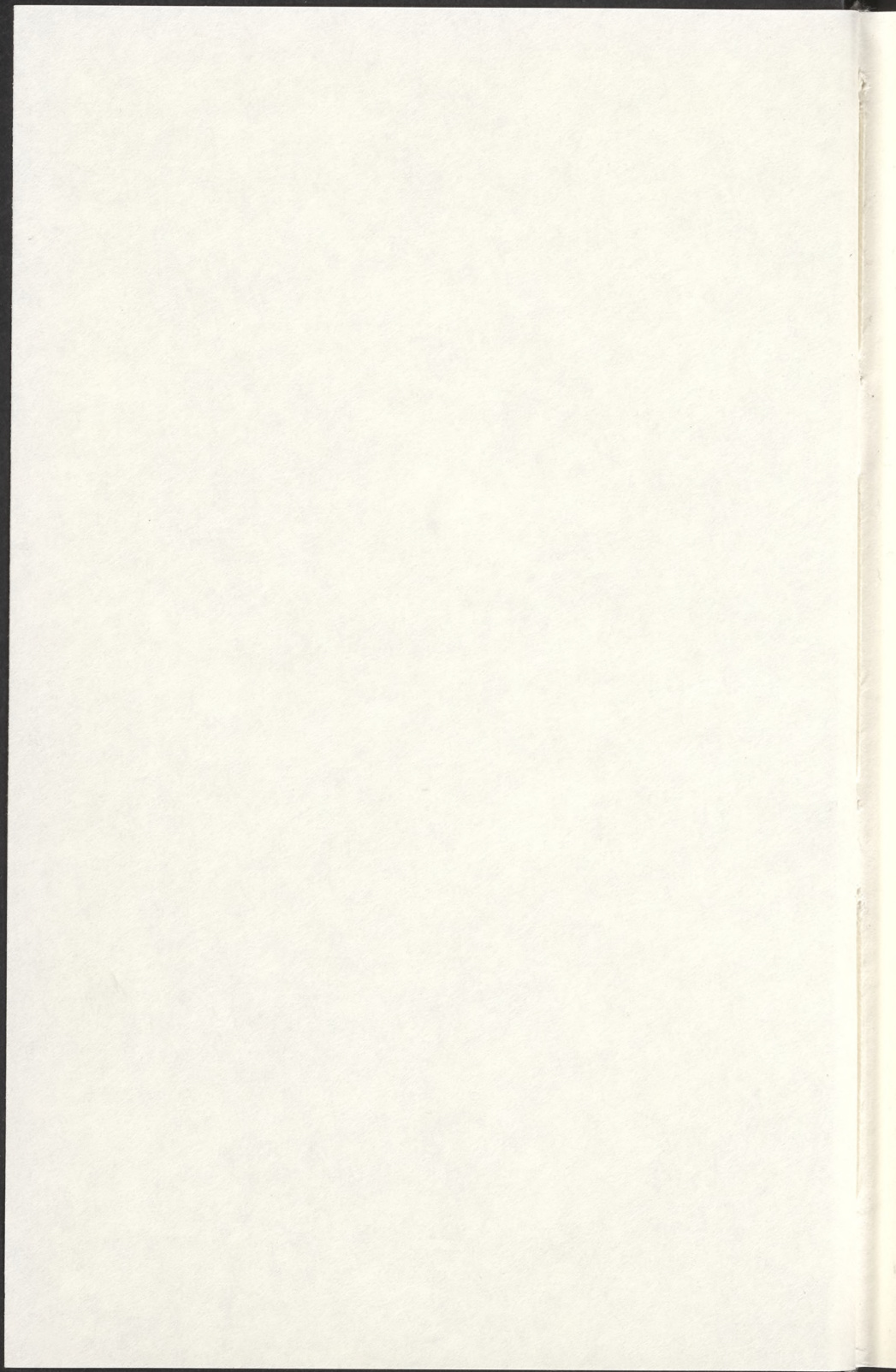


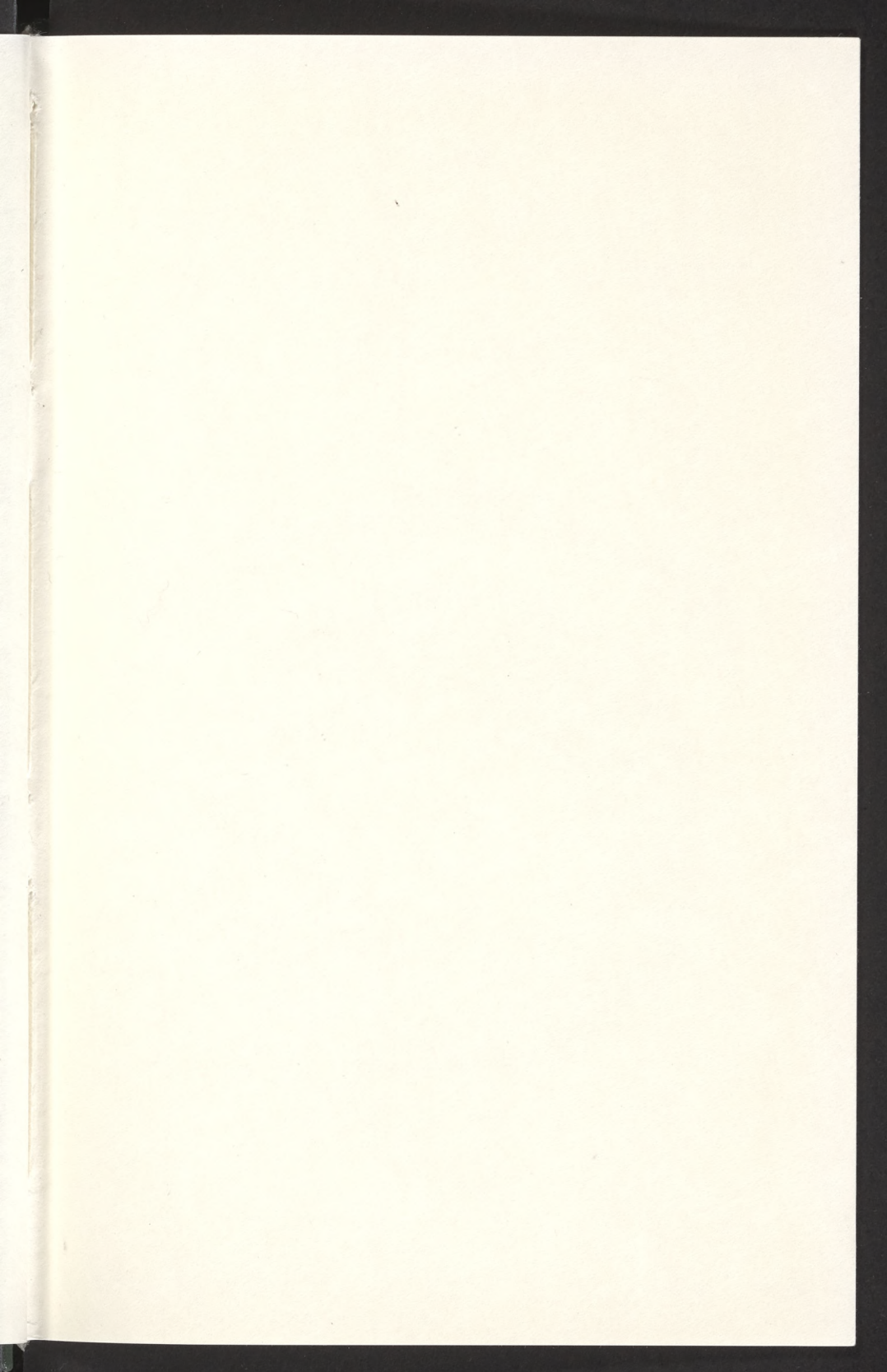
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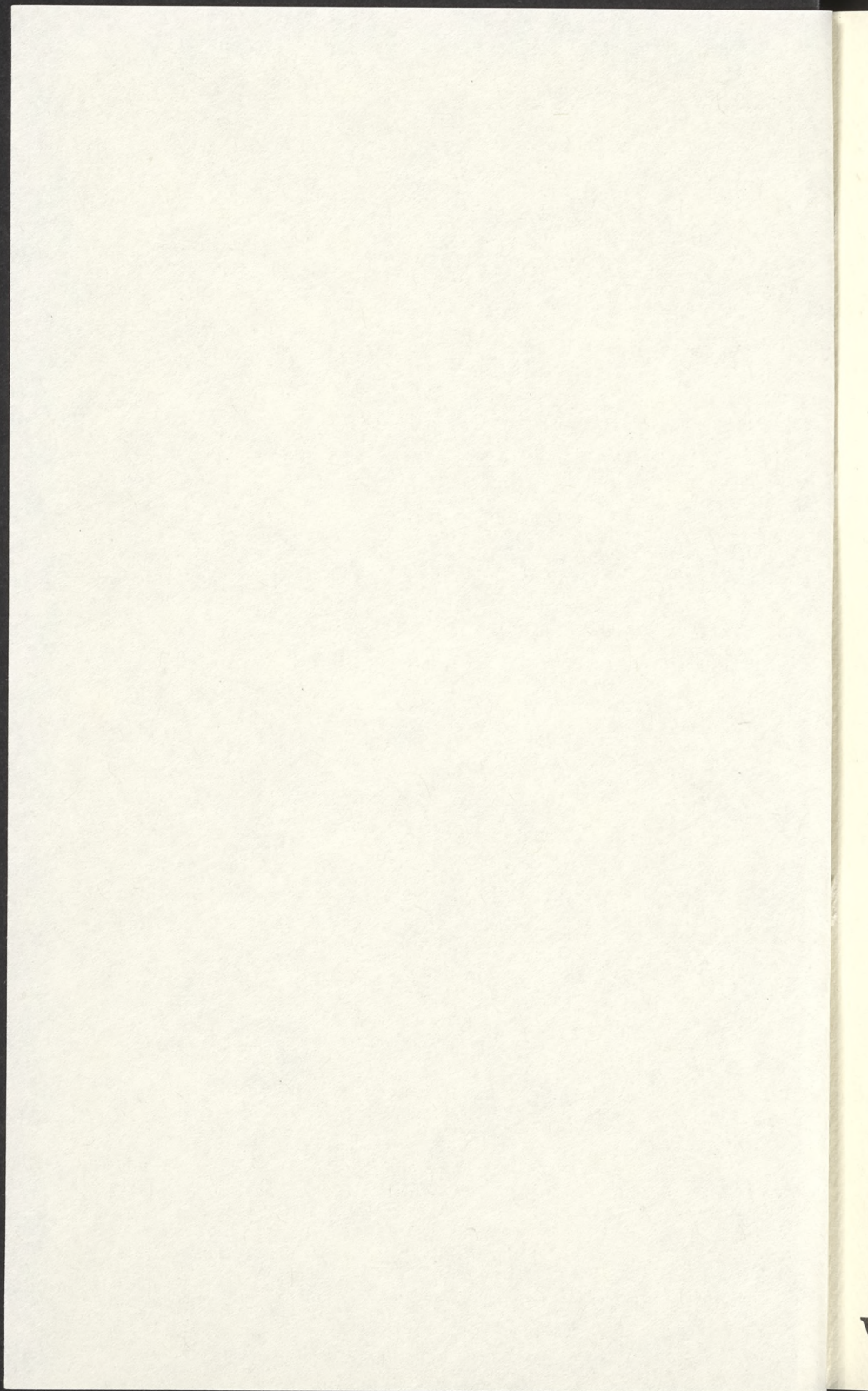
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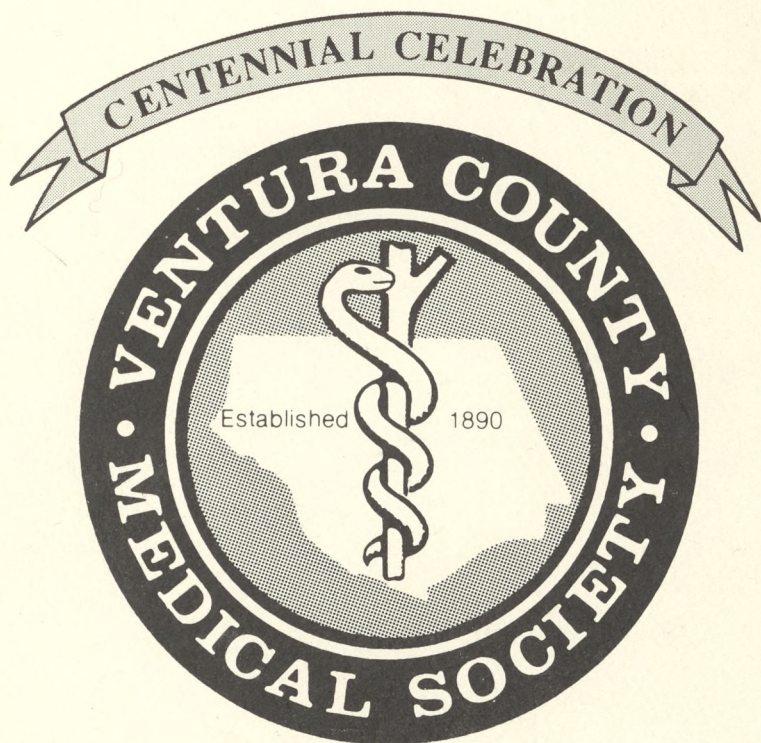








THE
VENTURA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY



1890 - 1990

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THE VENTURA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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This issue of the *Quarterly* is dedicated to Gerald K. Ridge M.D.,
fellow classmate, Cephas Bard aficionado, and unofficial historian
of the Ventura County Medical Society. He was the first.

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**"Doctoring" in Ventura County:
A History
Commemorating the Centennial Celebration
of the
Ventura County Medical Society**

by Joseph F. Maguire, M.D.

THE VENTURA COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY has been in existence as an organized part of Southern California medicine for over 100 years. The following chronicle commemorates the Centennial Celebration of the Ventura County Medical Society.

Prior to the coming of organized medicine in Southern California, there was some "disorganized" medicine for the necessary care of the sick and injured of the native Indian and the Californio population. The Indians of the Ventura area, according to Dr. Cephas Bard, were a magnificent people, physically and mentally. Their skeletons and the skeletons of those of the Tehachapi area have been found to be much larger than other Indian tribes of California. These Indians had a very complete knowledge of the use of extracts of plants for their healing powers, and according to Dr. Bard, about twenty of these extracts were new to the doctors of his day (who were also users of "vegetable medicines"). The native population had their own medicine men whom the Spanish called *hechiceros*. These men practiced their art, as many native people did, by calling upon the spirits and incorporating the use of incensed smoke, rattles, and songs. They medicated their patients with these "vegetable" (or herbal) medicines with good

results. The *hechicero* could be recognized by his long robe, made from woven human hair, that the Spaniards felt was a sign of Satanism. These robes were taken away from those who were caught, and the robes burned.

During the time of the Spanish in California, only one surgeon (more or less educated) was appointed to take care of what is now the entire state of California. This was what we now call a medical corpsman (*arriero*) who took care of the pack animals, the riding animals of the officers, and the humans of the exploration, as well as those animals and humans of the presidios and small towns that grew up around the missions. It is said that Father Serra, who developed a (probable) severe varicose ulcer on one of his legs with accompanying edema and pain, asked the *arriero* who accompanied his group through California, to pretend he (Father Serra) was a beast of burden, that the ulcer on his leg was a saddle gall, and to treat it in the same way he would the beast of burden; treatment was given, but there is no record of the result.

With the development of small centers of population throughout California, and of course in the county of Ventura, there came men who, one might say, specialized in medicine. In Ventura, such a person was Don José de Arnaz (a name that should be familiar to all), a graduate physician (as were many Spanish gentlemen of the time), who did not practice medicine for pay, but took care of those who asked for his help as he made his daily rounds of the city of San Buenaventura (Don José was the man who laid out the city of San Buenaventura and who advertised in New York newspapers for settlers to come to Ventura).

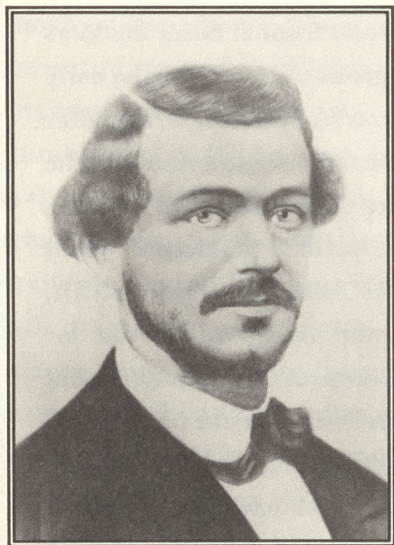
Cephas L. Bard, M.D.

Was born at Chambersburgh, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, April 7, 1843. Inheriting a taste for the study of medicine, nearly all of his maternal ancestors being physicians, and on his paternal side being connected with Drs. John and Samuel Bard, founders of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of New York, he early determined to devote himself to the medical profession, and after completing a course of study at the Chambersburgh Academy, he entered the office of classical studies at the office of Dr. A.H. Seuseney, one of Pennsylvania's most talented physicians. Whilst an office student, the reverses of McClellan occurred, and Dr. Bard, yielding to patriotism and responding to the call for volunteers, enlisted as a private in Company A, 126th Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers, and with that regiment participated in the battles of Second Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburgh, and Chancellorsville. The term of service having expired, he returned to his studies, attending lectures at Jefferson Medical College. Again, yielding to a sense of patriotism, he after passing a satisfactory examination and being appointed Assistant Surgeon of Pennsylvania Volunteers, went to the front, and with his regiment participated in all of the successes and reverses of the Army of the Potomac, until the surrender of Lee at Appomattox. Returning to his old home, he practiced his profession until 1868, when he moved to San Buenaventura, California, he being the first American physician to locate there.

From Thompson & West, *History of Santa Barbara & Ventura Counties*

The first physician to actually practice for pay in the county was Dr. Manuel Antonio Rodriguez de Poli, who had a flourishing practice in addition to being a very successful cattle rancher. Unfortunately, after only a few years in Ventura, Dr. Poli, was bucked off a horse at Tres

Pinos and killed while riding with a herd of cattle he was taking to Northern California to sell.



Dr. Manuel Antonio Rodriguez de Poli

The first American physician to practice in the county was Cephas Little Bard, a native of Pennsylvania and a graduate of Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. Dr. Bard served as a private and then as an Assistant Surgeon in the Civil War (see the short biography of Dr. Bard on page 5). After the war he returned to his home town of Chambersburg and practiced there for approximately two years. In 1868, Dr. Bard came to

Ventura where he became the first trained American physician to locate here. His brother, Thomas Bard, preceded him by about two years and was probably instrumental in encouraging the doctor to come to Ventura. Thomas Bard was an agent in Ventura County for Thomas A. Scott, vice-president and general manager of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Dr. Bard practiced medicine to the fullest extent in Ventura and made calls to the sick and injured over the entire length and breadth of the county. He was called on frequently by other physicians in



Cephas L. Bard

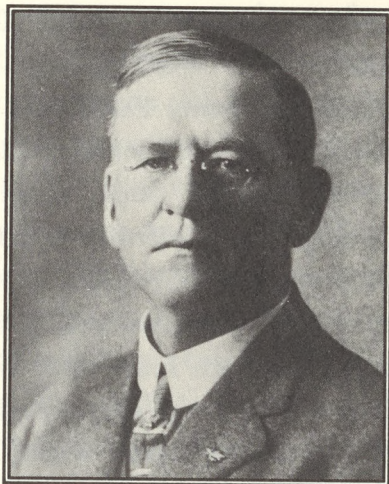
the county for consultation, and, as it states in one of many articles written about him in the *Ventura Free Press*, he could be seen at all hours of the day and night, riding one of his saddle horses or proceeding in a buggy to deliver a baby, taking care of an injured worker, or a small child ill with disease; doing everything, and being physician to everyone in the county. He was a physician to all people in the county, and particularly so to the city of San Buenaventura, where Dr. Bard paid no attention to a patient's or a patient's family's ability to pay him. He took all comers and there was no requisite down payment to be made before Dr. Bard would see an individual. He was truly a man who lived by his Hippocratic Oath, who considered himself at least a quasi-public

servant, if not a complete public servant, and his sense of duty was remarkable, even for those days. No one ever heard Dr. Bard mention the amount of money he was losing or the amount of money he was owed by his patients.

As the city of San Buenaventura slowly grew, more and more physicians came into the area. Twenty-two years after Dr. Bard's arrival in the community, there were eleven "regular" M.D.'s practicing in the towns of San Buenaventura, Ojai, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, Fillmore, Saticoy and West Saticoy. At this time (1890) there were approximately twenty-six organized county medical societies in the state of California, including Los Angeles County, which was first organized in 1850, became moribund, and was reorganized in 1872. It is interesting to note that the physicians of Santa Barbara County did not organize themselves until sometime in 1894, and with the tremendous geographical distance between their two centers of population, Santa Barbara and Santa Maria, the society became inactive until 1903, when it was reorganized.

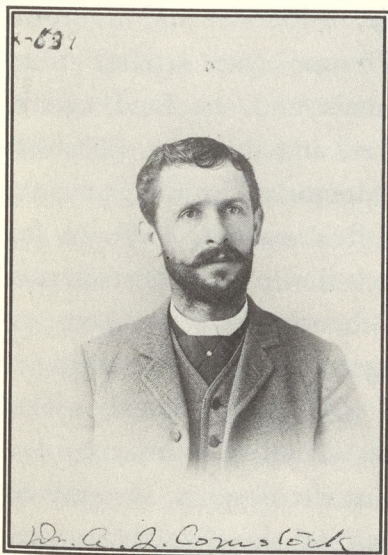
On March 25, 1890, Dr. Bard called the eleven physicians of the county to a meeting to organize a county medical society. Charter members were Drs. Bard (who was named President), A.J. Comstock, who was named Secretary/Treasurer, D.W. Mott, Vice-President, R.W. Hill, J.P. Hinkley, A.L. Kelsey, Joshua Marks, C.F. Miller, M.F. Patten, B.L. Saeger, and O.V. Sessions. From this small nucleus has risen today's large society. At the time the Society was formed, the towns of Ventura County (population centers that were big enough to deserve the name of town) were

San Buenaventura, the largest, Hueneme, Ojai, Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Saticoy. Dr. Sessions was the physician in Hueneme, Dr. Saeger in Ojai, Dr. Mott in Santa Paula, Dr. Hinkley in Fillmore, and Dr. Kelsey in Saticoy. Dr. Marks was the superintendent of the then county hospital which was located at what is now Thompson Boulevard and Figueroa Street (present site of the school district bus yard). Dr.



Dr. David Mott, Santa Paula

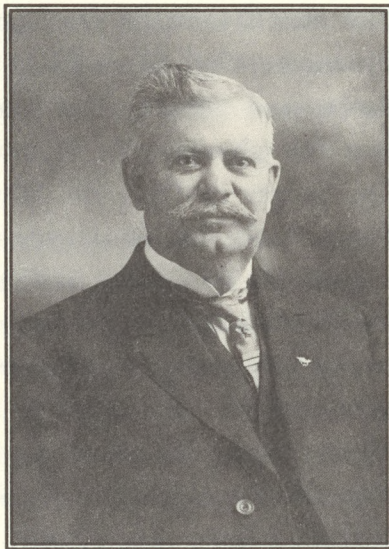
Comstock and Dr. Patten practiced in San Buenaventura, Dr. Hill was with Dr. Sessions in Hueneme. There was no Camarillo, Oxnard, Thousand Oaks, or Simi Valley (although there was a small settlement at Simi, the remnant of a doctor's group from Chicago, that died a rather slow death prior to the coming of the railroad).



Dr. A. J. Comstock

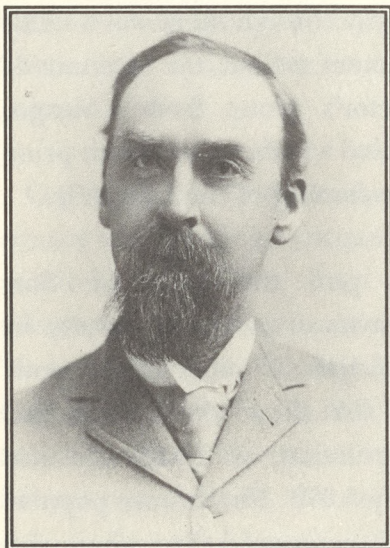
To put the size of San Buenaventura and the county in perspective, it must be remembered that the town, in 1890, had a population of 2,320 and the county 5,073. The county population was scattered throughout the

communities of Nordhoff (Ojai), Saticoy and West Saticoy, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, and Fillmore, with considerably smaller areas such as Simi, Piru and Springville. The initial members of the Society cared for all these people by means, usually, of house calls, although some of their patients, who lived within eight to ten hours of travel, were office patients.



Dr. J.P. Hinkley
Fillmore's first doctor

The first decade of our society is cloaked in obscurity. In its second



Dr. O. V. Sessions, Hueneme

decade, its founder and his brother, Thomas (the senator from California and the land agent), financed and built the Elizabeth Bard Memorial Hospital in memory of their mother. This was the county's first private hospital and it had the rather dubious honor of having had as one of its first patients, Dr. Cephas Bard, whose demise was also the first recorded death at the hospital. He entered the hospital shortly after its com-

pletion in early 1902, and died two or three months later after surgery for a "cancerous growth." Dr. A.J. Comstock and the other physicians, of course, continued the care of the sick and lame in San Buenaventura. It is interesting to note that Dr. Bard, in addition to being the first president of the Ventura County Medical Society, was also one of the founders and first president of the Ventura County Pioneer Society. This group, composed of old settlers of Ventura County, has grown into today's Ventura County Historical Society. Dr. Bard was also president of the Southern California Medical Society from 1893 to the spring of 1894, and was president of the California Medical Association from April 1897 to April 1898. It was at the 1898 annual meeting of CMA, held in Fresno, that a rather rough session of "fisticuffs" began due to differences of opinion between supporters of two different nominees to succeed Dr. Bard as president of the Association.

Dr. Thomas E. Cunnane, about six years out of medical school, joined Dr. Bard in 1900 and practiced medicine with him until the older man's death. Dr. Cunnane had come from the Santa Ynez area where he began practice after graduation from medical school. After Dr. Bard's death, Dr. Cunnane continued with his practice until his retirement in 1920. He was an excellent physician. He was also the owner of the third automobile in Ventura County, a member of the City Council for several years, and a member of the high school and grammar school boards, being a member of the latter for twenty-four years. He retired to his large home in the Cunnane tract on Seaward Avenue in 1920, but remained active in the community. In 1946, he was still a

member of what was then called the "Lunacy Commission," examining and recommending disposition of individuals who were alleged to be mentally ill and were confined to Loma Hall where court proceedings were held to determine their disposition.

Stepping back to the second decade of the Society's existence, we know very little about what went on, what type of meetings were held, what the programs were, and so forth. However, medicine as a whole in the United States was undergoing a marked ferment, most of the activity centering around the education a doctor of medicine received at the time.



Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Cunnane
at home on Lexington Drive

As noted in one of the VCMS monthly bulletins, in 1894 there were 500 "regular M.D.'s, 130 [so-called] homeopathics, 40 eclectics," and a large number of "irregulars, quacks, and mountebanks" practicing in Southern California.

In an effort to gain some measure of control over this state of affairs, the Carnegie Foundation funded a commission in 1908 to look into the effectiveness of medical education. This commission was chaired by Abraham Flexner, brother of New York pathologist Simon Flexner, who helped his brother a great deal in the commission's survey conducted from 1909-10. Each organized (and semi-organized) medical school was surveyed in depth and conclusions drawn as to the effectiveness of the education that individuals were given. Needless to say, many of these organizations were simply diploma mills with no association with a hospital and/or university. They only attempted to teach young men and women to be doctors (the statement was frequently made during the commission's inspections, "how else could a young, poor man become a physician, if not by attending schools such as these which did not require a great deal of money to attend, and where students did not have to attend for any great length of time?"). The commission came to the conclusion that a medical school with no association with a college, university, or established hospital (where the student could obtain clinical experience), was unable to give a proper medical education. Incidentally, this commission was given the American Medical Association's full cooperation in the investigation. The report was submitted to the Foundation and published in 1910.

At the time of the investigation's publication, there was one medical college in Southern California that had been in existence since 1894. This was the College of Medicine of the University of Southern California which trained its students at Los Angeles County Hospital and had the blessing of the L.A. County Board of

Supervisors to do so. The students were, more or less, under the rule of the Superintendent of the hospital. In 1909, because of financial difficulties, the Dean of the medical school turned the real estate of the school, and its attending students, over to the University of California's "Medical Department in Los Angeles" (not to be confused with the present day U.C.L.A.). Within months of this takeover, the College of Physicians and Surgeons, which had been an independent "free standing college," signed up with USC and became the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the University of Southern California. The Association of American Medical Colleges, at the same time, accepted this school as one of its members. There were now two schools of medicine in Los Angeles, both teaching some of their junior year and most of their senior year at the county hospital. They continued their association with the county hospital until the University of California Medical Department in Los Angeles stopped teaching in 1914 and the College of Physicians and Surgeons Medical Department of the University of Southern California closed its doors in 1917. Both of these schools were investigated by Dr. Flexner, and while neither institution absolutely flunked, they received meager praise. Although the University of California taught no more students in Los Angeles, it did keep a clinic on North Broadway originally started by the College of Medicine, U.S.C. This clinic remained in operation until about 1952.

This discussion of medical schools may not seem pertinent to the history of Ventura County Medical Society, however, the next "mover and shaker" in the profession in Ventura had his first two years of medical school under the aegis of USC and his last two

years of medical school under the University of California Medical Department in Los Angeles.



Dr. Ralph W. Homer

The young man was Ralph W. Homer, who was born in Missouri and came to Los Angeles with his parents when he was four years old. He graduated from the University of California, medical department in Los Angeles in 1911, had a year of internship at the Los Angeles County Hospital, and then spent a term (actual amount of time unknown) as the physician for the Los Angeles County Farm. Sometime between graduation from school and the finish of his term at the Los Angeles County Farm, he passed the State Board of Medical Examiners licensing

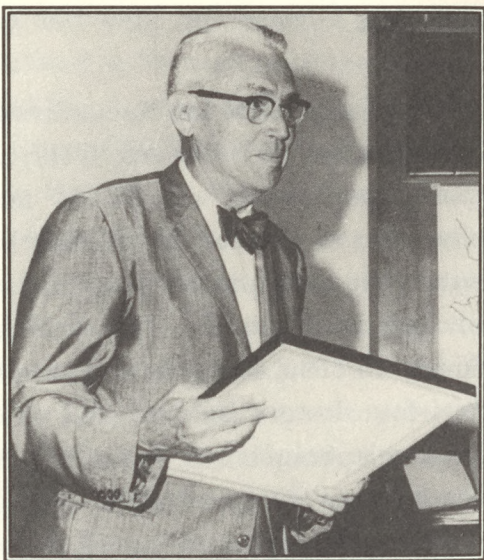
examination, came to Ventura and went into practice with Dr. G.A. Stockwell. Dr. Homer practiced in Ventura until the United States became involved in World War I, when he joined the Navy as a Lieutenant, J.G. Medical Corps (1917) and served until the end of the war. He returned to Ventura in 1919 and organized the Ventura Medical Group, consisting of himself, Dr. Grundy Coffee, Dr. Will J. Lewis (both of whom had served in the army during World War I) and Dr. E.K. Roberts, a dentist. This was an association, not a corporation or partnership. Each man had his own practice, nurse, and records, but the administrative portion of the office was operated as a whole, and the employees in that department were paid by each of the members (this is commented on in Sol N. Sheridan's history of Ventura County as a brand new concept in medical practice). Today a great number of physicians who are not in a partnership or corporation, but have more than one physician in an office, are in this type of association. They have their own private practice, but associate to pay office overhead (also to take night and weekend calls on a rotating basis). Almost as soon as Dr. Homer returned from service, he was appointed County Physician, which also made him the medical director of Ventura County General Hospital, a position he occupied until 1958. Sometime between 1922 and 1926, Dr. Homer was elected president of Ventura County Medical Society and continued to have, even after his term of office was over, a "man behind the throne" type of power in the government of the Society. In 1928, he invited Dr. Charles Smolt to come to Ventura from his internship at L.A. County Hospital; he was the first resident physician to care for patients at the County Hospital. The residency program began in that year and has been in operation

ever since.

In the early 1920s San Buenaventura had a population of 4,156; Santa Paula, 3,697; Oxnard, 4,417; and Fillmore, 1,597. The total county population was 28,724 and there were twenty-seven physicians to care for this number of people (there was only one man in the community who specialized and that was Dr. A.H. Hall who practiced eye, ear, nose, and throat medicine on California Street). In 1930, there were a total of 54,976 people and a total of forty-four doctors listed in, what would today be, the yellow pages of the telephone book. These figures add up to a county population increase of approximately 25,000 and an increase of eighteen practicing physicians in the county. In 1920, that gave an average of one physician for every 1,114 people, and in 1930, one physician for every 1,250 people, which, according to the Flexner Report, was a pretty good ratio of physician to population in both years. Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine how many of the physicians listed in the telephone books or in the directories were M.D.'s and how many were other breeds of cat, so we are unable to give any conclusion as to the number of members of the Society. In a discussion of this question, Dr. Smolt estimates there were approximately 25 or 26 members in the Ventura County Medical Society when he arrived in Ventura to start his residency,

The residency program, after beginning with Dr. Smolt, continued to grow slowly over the years. There were 1-2 residents at the hospital from 1928-1932, 4 from 1933-1937, 5 residents from 1937-1940, either 1 or 4 in 1940-1945 depending on the

number of qualified physicians available (this was during World War II years when the young, physically qualified M.D. was certain to be grabbed by one of the armed services). After the war, from 1946-1966, there were, at all times, 5-7 residents in attendance; from 1967-1969, there were 6-8, then a big jump in 1970-1977, with anywhere from 16-27 resi-



Dr. Charles A. Smolt

dents on duty. From 1978-1979 there were an average of 29 residents, and from 1979-1990 there have been 32-35 residents. In 1971, the hospital began accepting not only residents, but also interns. The rosters show a second year resident, a first year resident, and interns making a total of three years of family practice training given at the hospital; this training continues to the present. This bit of semanticism lasted until the entering class of 1975 when there were first, second, and third year residents. Until 1980, 369 M.D.'s had served a two or three year residency at the county. Some of these, however, did not complete the entire two years prior to and during the war. Of that group, 96 set up practice in Ventura through 1980, and of that 96, 22 have retired or expired.

As we have seen earlier in this history, Thomas and Cephas

Bard built the Elizabeth Bard Memorial Hospital in honor of their mother, Dr. Bard was one of the first patients in the new hospital when it opened, and he succumbed there about three months later. The hospital continued serving the patients of the community who were not the so-called indigent or transient population until 1922. On January 31 of that year, Richard Bard, who acted for the Bard interests, requested a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Big Sisters League, a charitable organization of prominent and ordinary San Buenaventura citizens, and formally tendered Bard Hospital and its \$10,000 endowment fund to that organization. The Board took the proposition under advisement and met later with the Bard Hospital people (the Board consisted of Mrs. Walter Hoffmann, Chairman; Mrs. C.G. Bartlett, Mrs. L.H. Durley, Mrs. W.F. Goodyear, E.P. Foster and Attorney Don Bowker). The Board accepted the Bard interest's offer and arrangements were made to transfer the hospital and its endowment fund to the Big Sisters, after which time it would be known as Big Sisters Hospital. Miss Mary Ferdinand, who for a long time had been connected with both the county hospital and the Bard Hospital, was appointed matron of the hospital by the Board. She was replaced some years later by Mrs. Gertrude Fuller as Superintendent, and Mrs. Fuller went on to continue the same work for the new E.P. Foster Hospital.

By 1930, the Big Sisters Hospital was no longer useful as such (not enough beds and some structural problems were beginning to be noted). A new hospital was begun on Loma Vista Road at Brent Street with monies donated by Mr. E.P. Foster, a wealthy Ventura businessman (this was far out in the country at that time,

the city itself only extended up to just east of Cemetery Hill). Foster's initial capital came from monies realized from his properties on Ventura Avenue that were leased by Shell Oil Company for drilling purposes. In addition to the building of the new hospital, he was also responsible for the donation of the fairgrounds and Foster Park to the County. The new hospital was originally named Hospital de San Buenaventura, but shortly after its erection and occupation in 1931, the name was changed to Foster Memorial Hospital in honor of its benefactor who had died in February of 1932.

Origins of Community Memorial Hospital

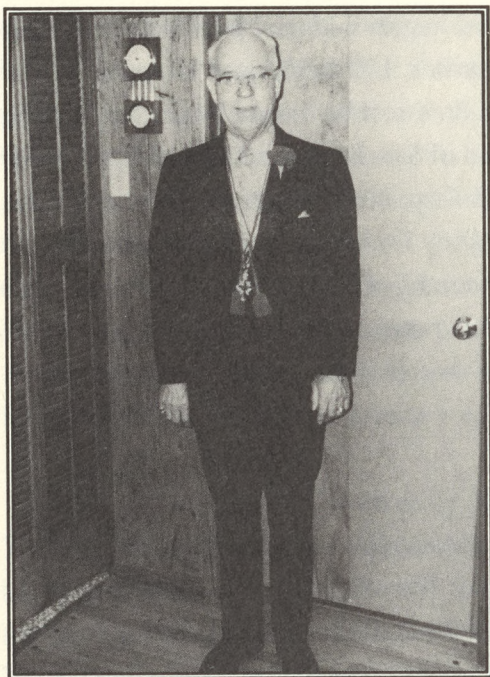
Foster wished to endow the hospital with sufficient monies to allow it to keep operating no matter what its income was; he died before this could become a reality. This made problems for the Board of Trustees of the hospital and for Mrs. Fuller, Superintendent of the new hospital. In 1951, Mrs. Ida Goodyear of Simi donated monies to expand the hospital with the construction of a new maternity wing that opened in 1951 and had twenty maternity beds, three labor rooms, two delivery rooms, and a surgery room for Caesarean sections and other natal, pre-natal, and post-natal surgery. This donation by Mrs. Goodyear was to be followed by a second donation of a large tract of orange trees in the Simi Valley area. Mrs. Goodyear, unfortunately, suffered a severe stroke that rendered her incapable of following through with her wishes and the hospital was forced to get along on its income. The new maternity wing was built on stilts in 1951 and ten years later, the "stilts" were enclosed and another twenty-five beds added, to this, the so-called east wing. In 1972, the present

Community Memorial Hospital began with the construction of an additional five floors with another 102 beds, and the old Foster Memorial building was torn down. The name was changed to Community Memorial Hospital of San Buenaventura. Three more floors were added in 1971 and Fritz Huntsinger, a member of the Board of Trustees, donated money for what is now the Huntsinger Wing including the ground floor laboratory facilities, the second floor, used as a physio and occupational therapy (in conjunction with the recently added same-day surgical facilities in the emergency rooms), and the third floor used for medical administrative work.

Many well known Ventura physicians have been on the staff of Community Memorial Hospital; "Dr. Pick" Homer, Chief of Staff for many years, was on the staff from the beginning of the hospital until after World War II, Dr. Smolt, also many-time holder of Chief of Staff rank, Dr. Fred Shore, Dr. Harry Barker, Dr. Jim Moore, Dr. Woody Schmela, Dr. Henry Rulfo, Dr. Dan Clark; all practiced at this hospital and had a great deal to do with its endowment and administration.

Beginnings in Oxnard

Fifteen years after the founding of Oxnard in 1897, Reverend J.S. Laubacher, pastor of Santa Clara Church, invited the Sisters of Mercy from San Diego to establish a hospital in the Ventura County farming community. To initiate the project, John Borchard, an Oxnard rancher, donated eight acres of land. A



Dr. Harry E. Barker

six-room temporary building was constructed, mostly by community volunteers. The original six-room hospital, built in 1904, was converted into a kitchen and store room at the end of World War I.

In 1914, the first permanent hospital in Oxnard was built; it contained twenty-five beds. The hospital was approved by the American College of Surgeons and by the American Medical Association. Many

changes were subsequently made in the hospital, including an elevator donated by the Catholic Womens' Club and, seven years later, a new boiler and a laundry were added. A Coronary Care Unit, X-ray department, and other ancillary services were also developed. In November 1914, at the time of the opening of the new hospital, Dr. Robert Livingston introduced twilight sleep for delivery of babies. Dr. Livingston learned this new technique in child birth in Freiberg, Germany while serving as a California delegate to the American Clinical Congress of Surgeons. After his tour in Germany, he returned to his home area of Oxnard and started his obstetrical practice. By the time he died in harness, he had women from the entire Southern California area coming to

Oxnard for the delivery of their babies using twilight sleep. His associate Dr. Herman Roy continued the technique until his death in 1955.

During World War II, the medical staff of the hospital became so reduced in number that the dinner meetings for staff were discontinued and the doctors' dining room was converted into a four-bed ward. An outpatient dispensary was built that the Seabees used, along with the main hospital, for their serious cases; Navy orderlies supplemented the nursing staff.

A campaign to build a new hospital was initiated after the war because it was quite obvious that the hospital was sadly lacking in space, accommodations, and modern equipment. A public subscription was begun in 1950 and ground was broken for the replacement of the old hospital in July of 1951. In December of 1952, the new St. John's was open for business with the 1,000 pound statue of St. John, the Evangelist, moved from the front of the old hospital to the front of the new one. The old hospital remained in use as a convent and storage facility until it was demolished in April 1968. The sisters then moved to the fourth floor of the new hospital and utilized that area as a convent.

Three years after completion of the new hospital, it reached peak operation. By 1957, hallways were being used in emergencies. Admissions doubled in a six-year period. A third floor was added in 1961, increasing the bed capacity to 129. A few years earlier, a 30-bed nursing home had been completed adjacent to the acute hospital and 20 more beds were added to this unit in

1963. Further need for expansion became obvious by 1964. After extensive planning by the medical staff and hospital administration, coordinated with state medical planning authorities, work on the four-story north annex was begun in March 1964. This building program, financed with the help of the community, added 152 beds, new radiology, laboratory and physical therapy departments, a cysto-fracture room for surgery, a nine-bed recovery room, two new delivery rooms and additional labor rooms for the delivery suite. The fourth floor of the north annex was laid out for two complete nursing units. Since construction, this floor has been used for a new convent for the Sisters of Mercy. It will be converted to patient rooms when the need arises.

In 1968, the emergency room was expanded and a data processing system for hospital records was initiated. A cardiac care unit was opened in 1966 with four beds. Later it was expanded to nine beds, including a post-cardiac care section. A pulmonary medicine department was begun in 1967, with an inhalation therapy department added to the home health care program two years later. A neuromedical laboratory was added in 1969 to permit more accurate and rapid diagnoses of neurological problems. A school for radiology technicians was opened in February 1969. In August 1970, the first radiology students were graduated and the school was officially certified. Also in 1970, the dietary department received national recognition as one of the top ten hospitals for menu ideas.

St. Johns

Knowledge and technology in medical science has increased

tremendously during the last ten years. An example of St. John's Hospital's dedication to provide contemporary health care to its public is the cardiovascular laboratory that opened in August 1970, with open-heart surgery first performed in February 1972. St. John's new hemodialysis center, opened in August 1971, provides Ventura County with facilities to treat kidney disease patients as well as providing emergency dialysis for cases of poisoning and drug overdose. In 1972, St. John's established a modern, sophisticated facility for the treatment of burn patients. During 1973, the hospital's physical therapy department was approved in the state to provide out-patient rehabilitation services. Other diagnostic techniques and treatment facilities and medical equipment are continuously being analyzed and assayed for possible use.

Ojai, Santa Paula & Simi Valley

In the 1960s, with the burgeoning of county population (both civilian and doctor), hospitals began popping up all over the place. This growth was aided and abetted by Hill-Burton hospital funds furnished by the federal government. The first was a 45-bed unit in Ojai - the Ojai Valley Community Hospital - that opened its doors to patients in 1960. The next was Santa Paula Memorial Hospital, which was opened in 1961 and has 60 beds. Simi Valley Community Hospital, begun in 1965 as a 50-bed general hospital, and taken over by the Adventist Church in 1967, became the Simi Valley Adventist Hospital. In the early 1970s, an additional 95 beds were added, including skilled nursing care. In the later 1970s, the skilled nursing facility beds were converted into medical surgical beds because of a low occupancy of the SNF beds. Today the Simi Valley Adventist Hospital is a comprehensive 215-bed

medical center that operates inpatient beds in three distinct facilities, has a staff of 237 physicians, and offers a full spectrum of medical services.

Los Robles & Westlake

In 1969, Los Robles Hospital was the next to open, with a 225-bed capacity. The hospital has the distinction of being the first to do coronary bypass operations. This procedure was initiated by Dr. Harold Tsuji. The last hospital to be developed in the county was Westlake Medical Center which was built in 1972 and has 126 beds.

Ventura at War's End

At the close of World War II, with the discharge of servicemen from active duty and the return of many physicians who had been ordered into the armed forces, the population of the City of Ventura gradually increased from approximately 14,000 at the beginning of the war, to 20,000 in early 1946. The number of doctors in the county medical society, rose from approximately 35-37 to 62 in 1946. The rise in population and the rise in physicians has continued since that time. By early 1990, the Ventura County Medical Society had 610 members, and the total physicians practicing in the county totalled approximately 1,200.

Office calls immediately after the war were generally \$3, an injection of penicillin or other type of medication was \$2, a house call cost \$4, and if it was necessary to drive out beyond the city limits, there was a fee of five cents a mile for each mile going out (one way); no mileage reimbursement for the return trip. Pre-natal care and delivery and post-natal care in 1946 cost \$50; this care rose to \$75 in a year or two and gradually worked its way

up to \$150 in early 1960. There was no ultrasound to determine sex of the baby, nor was there amniocentesis, and whoever heard of genetic counseling and all of the other procedures that are done now-a-days that we old hands can't figure any reason for doing other than, shall we say, paralegal.

Jim Hunter and I were the first two people back from service to go into practice in Ventura and those physicians who had been left behind were extremely tired of taking the brunt of five years of very hard work. They referred many of their emergent house calls to Jim and me, which led to many office calls in our first two or three years after our return. It was an excellent time to begin the practice of medicine since we did have the various chemotherapeutics (the sulfas), and we did have the one antibiotic, penicillin, with many more in the immediate future. These cut down tremendously the number of patients that we had to stand by helplessly and watch die. There was little, if any, interference in the practice of medicine by government agencies. It was truly a golden era in which to practice. I think the fact that we were young and "full of beans" helped a great deal too. There was a relative minimum of physicians in two large cities, Ventura and Oxnard. There was one doctor in Ojai, Claude Drace, who was soon joined by Dr. Jerry Rupp back from service. Santa Paula had Drs. Art Strong and Darrell Clark; they were soon joined by Bob Robertson home from service. In Fillmore, Bill Nelson held down the fort until Don Musgrave and Bill French came in to help. In Moorpark, there was Harold Osborne. He was joined by Bill Jones around the middle 1940s, and over in Simi (which was not Simi Valley, or even a city at that time), John Jones, Bill's brother, held

down the fort. In the small community of Thousand Oaks, there was an osteopath by the name of Basket who took care of the few people there, and who also had a fair amount of traffic accidents to treat, from old Ventura Boulevard to Los Angeles. In Camarillo, we had one physician who was there before the war, but who left after the war and never returned. Tony Muff came in and was the town's only doctor for several years. In Saticoy, we had Wes Cruden, who was joined after several years by Charles Hair (the possibility of a hospital in Saticoy was considered, but was abandoned rather quickly). In Port Hueneme, Dr. A. H. Crites had a rather large clinic and office practice as the only physician in the area. He also delivered babies, on a one-day in-and-out basis in his office, in a manner somewhat similar to the practice of Dr. Nelson D. Weed (the late D.O.) in Ventura. Oxnard had, in addition to those physicians already mentioned in the account of St. John's Hospital, Dr. John Monahan (who did not have to serve in the armed forces due to a physical problem that rendered him ineligible). Dr. Monahan worked himself into the ground after he finished his residency at Ventura General Hospital. Dr. Cloyce Huff came back at the end of his service to start practicing in September 1945. There was Bob Harker, the "ear-nose-throat" man; Morris Gandin, urologist, who set up in Oxnard shortly after the end of the war; Jim Lincoln; Dick Reynolds; Joe Higgins; Pete Pearson; and several others whose names do not quickly to mind.

Other than a fair number of physicians in San Buenaventura, and in Oxnard, there were very few physicians in the rest of the county; there was also very little population in the rest of the

county. Camarillo was still one main street, Ventura Boulevard. The largest building or structure in Thousand Oaks was the old jungle compound. Moorpark was one main street, five or six blocks long. Simi was a small cluster of houses around the Womens Center, a very nice, small building (maybe called the Ebell Club), that was a gathering place for the approximately 2,400 inhabitants in the area then. People from Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, Moorpark, and Simi who required hospitalization, were sent to St. John's. When people from Ojai, Santa Paula, Fillmore, and Piru required hospitalization, those who could afford it were admitted to Foster Hospital (old Foster Memorial had a bed capacity of 55), and when those beds were full, private patients were admitted to County Hospital. When there were more than six to ten O.B.'s at Foster (six of them in the ward and perhaps as many as four in private rooms), mothers were delivered at County Hospital; first-time mothers stayed for approximately seven to ten days, and mothers of two or more children stayed for no more than a week. It was also relatively common to have either the first or second floor of Foster Hospital closed for perhaps a week or two when the patient load was down.

To put things in better perspective, in 1940, Oxnard had a population of 8,519; Ventura had a population of 13,264; the little community of Simi had 2,406; and the county's total population was 69,000. In 1950, Oxnard had 21,500, and Ventura 16,500 ; the whole county was 114,647. In that year, Ojai and Fillmore ran about 4,800 people, Santa Paula 14,000; and Port Hueneme about 10,000. Oxnard has now reached (or surpassed) the 100,000 mark and Ventura the 95,000 mark. In 1988, the total population of

Ventura County was 611,000.

The Ventura County Medical Society has kept pace with this growth; in 1940 there were approximately 53 members; in 1950, 66 members; in 1960, 129; in 1970, 311; in 1980, 428, and as of 1990, there are more than 600 doctors in the Society, (out of approximately 1,200 practicing physicians in the county). In 1965, membership increased from 167 to 226 members, the biggest jump in numbers during the years until 1984, where available statistics run out. From these figures it can be concluded that the mid-1960s saw a tremendous change in the number of physicians, and in the number of people in the county.

The Emergence of Medicare

The advent of Medicare, which began in 1965, produced a ferment in the practice of medicine. With government payment for elderly patients' visits and medical treatment, there came an unbearable amount of paperwork entailed by this new method of payment.

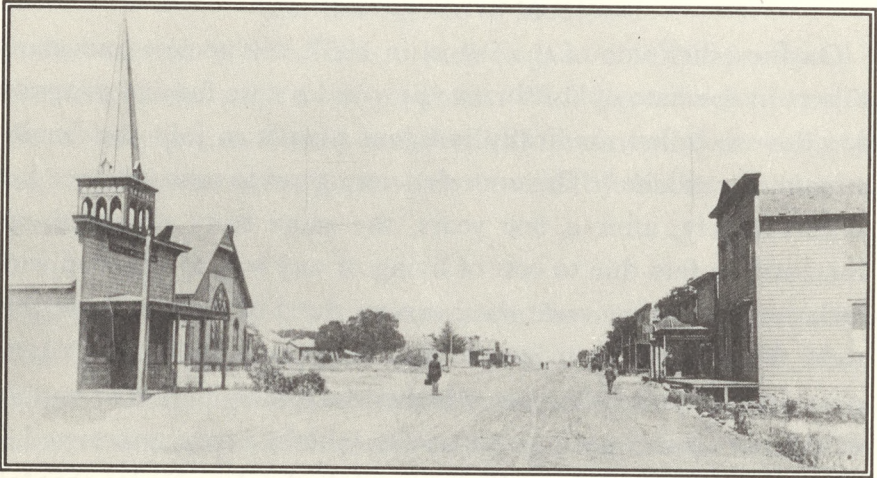
At the end of 1975, it was announced by our insurance carriers that malpractice insurance rates would increase ten-fold. Many doctors felt that government interference was becoming more and more intolerable. The amount of paperwork required by the government increased so drastically that additional staff was often required. There were several retirements of doctors at the end of 1975 and early 1976; most of us felt that we were fortunate to have practiced medicine during its golden years, 1945-1975 (even though a \$6 office call cost the physician \$4 in overhead).

The Society's history parallels that of the medical profession in general. In 1913, California was the first state in the Union to authorize care for industrial accidents (Maryland had predated California but the legal aspects of Maryland's act were ineffective; California's act was very effective). The only trouble was that the physicians of that day labeled this governmental interference in medicine as extremely socialistic and would have nothing to do with the act. Younger men coming into practice, however, found it an ideal way to collect a little money to help pay the rent, and by the 1920s, it was accepted practice to take care of industrial accidents. Unfortunately, it left the profession with a very poor fee schedule as well as a bad taste in everybody's mouth who tried to improve this schedule as the years went by.

On the other side of the fence, in 1957, this society and many others in the state of California approved a state funded program to allow so-called medically indigent people to join the "mainstream of medicine". This sounded very good to most doctors, but unfortunately, after a few years, the same story occurred; no increases in fees due to cost of living or any way to keep up with inflation. When the state was running short of money, those fees were the first things to be slashed, so apparently, it didn't (and doesn't) make any difference whether doctors cooperate or not; we still get it in the neck as far as fee schedules are concerned (I suppose this is a reflex reaction to everybody's knowledge that "all doctors are rich").

A Modest Proposal

I'm not going to be here for it, but I would like to recommend to the administration and the officers of the Society that from this point forward a log or continuing written record be kept so that the author responsible for compiling a history of the Ventura County Medical Society on its 200th Anniversary will not have to go through the same agony that I have gone through to locate information concerning our own history, which is also the history of medicine in Ventura County since March 25, 1890, when eleven physicians gathered at Dr. Bard's home to found this organization.



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Santa Paula, 1888

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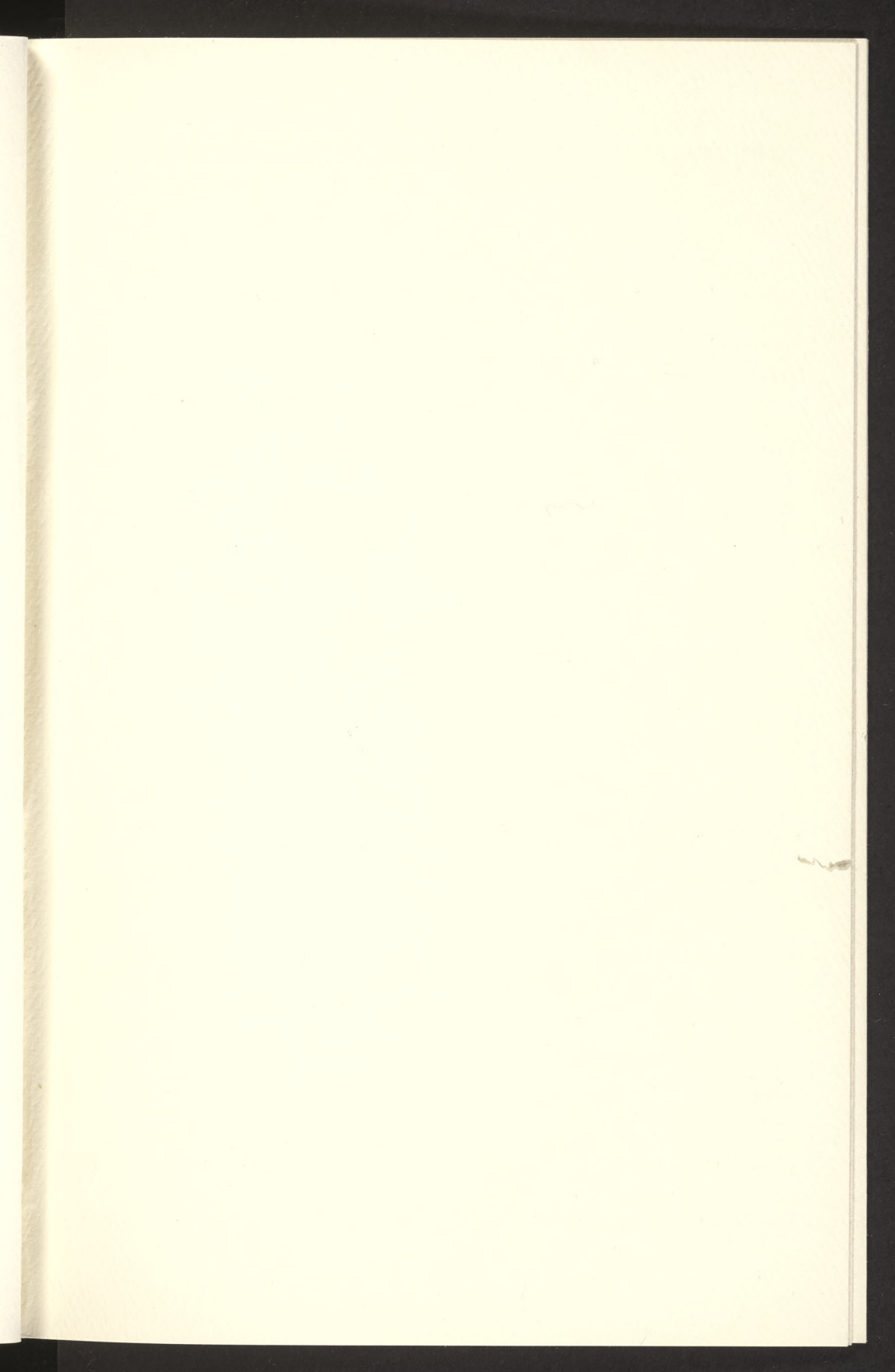
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY**

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THE
VENTURA COUNTY
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QUARTERLY

GLIMPSES
of



The Letters of Anna Reatha Earle

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WINTER 1990

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THE
VENTURA COUNTY
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QUARTERLY

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Editor's note: the letters of Anna Reatha Earle are presented largely as found; spelling and punctuation have been retained. Likewise, words crossed out have been preserved. These intended deletions occasionally provide added insight into the author's feelings. Line breaks and page breaks have been altered to accommodate the present format.

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He is employed as a Safety Consultant and, in his spare time, is an avid collector of local history books and memorabilia relating to Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.

Currently on the Board of Directors of the Santa Paula Historical Society, Craig is also an active member of the Santa Barbara and Ventura County Historical Societies.

Craig and his wife, Denise, live in Santa Paula.

Hope Smalley was born in Gladstone, New Jersey and attended schools in the East, graduating with a degree in English from Beaver College, Glenside, Pennsylvania, and a degree in Library Service from Columbia University in the City of New York.

She came to Ventura County in 1951, becoming Head of the Library Division at the U.S. Naval Civil Engineering Laboratory in Port Hueneme, retiring in 1972.

In 1977, Hope completed the Docent Training Course and has been with the Ventura County Museum of History & Art ever since. Her main focus, naturally, has been the Museum library where she specializes in the cataloguing of books, music, videotapes and ephemeral materials.

Hope and her mother, Carolyn Horton, live in Camarillo.

GLIMPSES OF ROSELAND: The Letters of Anna Reatha Earle

Introduction and Concluding Remarks

by

Craig W. Held

IN NORTH OXNARD, AN ELEGANT HOME STANDS witness to the cars rushing by as the farmland disappears into industrial development. This home holds memories and stories of a different life from around the turn of the century. We are privileged to have a glimpse of that time period through the letters of Anna Reatha Earle. Anna was governess for the L.J. Rose, Jr. family who lived on their 260 acre ranch, "Roseland," located at Gonzales Road and Rose Avenue in what was then considered El Rio. In 1899, Anna came to Roseland to assume the duties as the new governess to the Rose children.

Anna Reatha Earle was born in Ione, California, in Amador County on May 18, 1873. She and her sister Rose were the only surviving children of her parents, Simpson Buffington Earle and Almira Maria (Rendell) Earle. Anna began studying piano at an early age. At ten she became the organist for the local Methodist church, where special organ pedals were made so that she could play. When Anna was twelve the Earle family moved from Ione to San Jose, allowing her to continue music and piano studies at the Conservatory of the Pacific under Professor King.

A few years later the family moved to the little community of Coyote, south of San Jose, where her father worked in the orchards of the Stevens' ranch. While her father worked long hours in the orchards, Anna was commuting by train to the

Conservatory, a distance of about twenty miles. Frank Stevens, to whom she was engaged for a while, used to meet her at the station in the afternoon and take her home by horse and buggy.

She graduated from the Conservatory when she was twenty, but was unable to find a teaching position in the public schools. For several years Anna stayed at home helping her mother, who was a seamstress, until she took a position as governess for the Rose family children. Anna was employed by the Rose family for approximately four months before she returned to the San Jose area, where she taught in a public grammar school for several years.

Anna met her future husband Alexander Van Valin through her sister Rose and her husband Jesse Snyder, who were living in South San Francisco. Anna and Alexander were married on September 26, 1900, and went to live on the Van Valin farm in Nelson, Nebraska. A son, Earle DuBois, was born in 1901 and a daughter, Rose Almira, was born in 1903. Anna was never very happy on the farm, and the Van Valin family returned to California and settled in South San Francisco around 1905. Later, they bought a house in San Mateo where their third child, Emily, was born.

Anna's daughter, Rose Almira (Van Valin) Trogden describes her as "... a well-bred woman of refined and gentle manners and sentiments. Her unselfish love for others was expressed early in life. She had the talent to have become a concert pianist, but lacked the endurance and strength for it. However, she passed on to her music pupils her soul-sense of beauty. Mother always expressed a quiet dignity, although she had a dry sense of humor as well."



Graduation from the Conservatory of the Pacific, 1893

Address:
El Rio
Ventura Co.
C/o L.J. Ross.

Roseland.

Saturday 4.30 P.M.

My dear ones at home.

Here I am at last writing to those I have left so far behind. I dropped a postal yesterday that left Saugus 2 P.M. and I hope you get it this afternoon. Well I shall go back to the beginning of the journey which seems so far in the past but only two days ago. After boarding the train at Coyote one of the first thoughts that came to me was, Oh, I left my rubbers under the stove; Carrie had put them there to dry. I consoled myself that probably

First letter, page one



[Letter Number One]

Roseland.

Saturday 4.30 P.M.

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Here I am at last writing to those I have left so far behind. I dropped a postal yesterday that left Saugus 2 P.M. and I hope you get it this afternoon. Well I shall go back to the beginning of the journey which seems so far in the past but only two days ago. After boarding the train at Coyote one of the first thoughts that came to me was, Oh, I left my rubbers under the stove; Carrie had put them there to dry: I consoled my self that probably like thoughts would come to me all day of things I hav [sic] left behind and it came true. The old shoes, old skirt, breast pin, comb etc. each came one by one to my mind. - You see when I came downstairs in the morning I intended to return of course, but did not so did not see them and were forgotten.

Mayme was in San Jose to meet me. boarded the Niles train and sat till it pulled out. She intends to come south some time in Feb. Is learing [sic] a new chart - and will take the agency for Los Angeles in connection with her business. After leaving San Jose the ~~clouds~~ sun burst through the clouds and was a pleasant ride all day. Had to remove gossamer and jacket.

At Lathrop¹ had 20 min. for lunch and then the south train pulled in. Rosa's² lunch was just splendid and the sandwiches [sic] tasted so good. I couldn't think of the dear sister without tears coming into my eyes. From Lathrop was the long tedious strip. Read physiology - all my eyes could stand - and rested - also. A great deal of plowing was being done. At one place there were four gang plows (close together) with ten horses each. I thought they really were "tearing up the sod" in earnest. No stop till we reached Fresno as I wrote you. and at 7:30 reached Tulare where Auntie³ and Ione⁴ were awaiting. They were so disappointed to think I could not stop over - Auntie especially: Onie said they were going to be married in Feb. I asked if she would not postpone it till June when I could be with them (I had nerve didn't I?) She answered Oh, she could never wait that long but said she would write all her plans to me. "Van"⁵ is at present in Sacramento earning \$5.20 per day. during legislation I suppose. Auntie looks very well and Onie does look so young. Auntie said ~~After~~ to be sure to write and tell her everything as soon as I arrived. "All aboard" sounded and I jumped on and we were at once whizzing onward. After passing Bakersfield the porter took me back to my berth. Before, however I had a talk with the conductor and found I had to change at Saugus 5.21 A.M. and there wait four hours when I would take the train to Montalvo and change there for Oxnard. Imagine how I felt about getting up in the dark. I was thankful I had not known it before. "Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise".

I stood the berth pretty well and slept some - awakened at twelve and three and decided to get up at 4.30. I had charged the porter emphatically to call me at 5. but I was up before him and

oh so sick when Saugus was called out I could hardly walk through the cars. It was akin to sea sickness I suppose The conductor led me to the waiting room where a feeble fire was burning. It was just light enough to see feebly faintly. One other occupant of the station was a young man suffering with consumption I should judge the way he coughed. [I sat till I could stand it no longer when I went behind the buildings and relieved myself - My stomach felt better.] At 7.30 I had breakfast. The dining room was under the same roof as the station. Back of this building was a house where one could get rooms but not another house in sight. I was surprised at the elegance of the table which was set with splendid silverware. On the wall was placarded "Meals seventy-five cents" I thought that was pretty steep but it was the only thing to do. The first course was either sliced



"Meals & Rooms" — Saugus Cafe

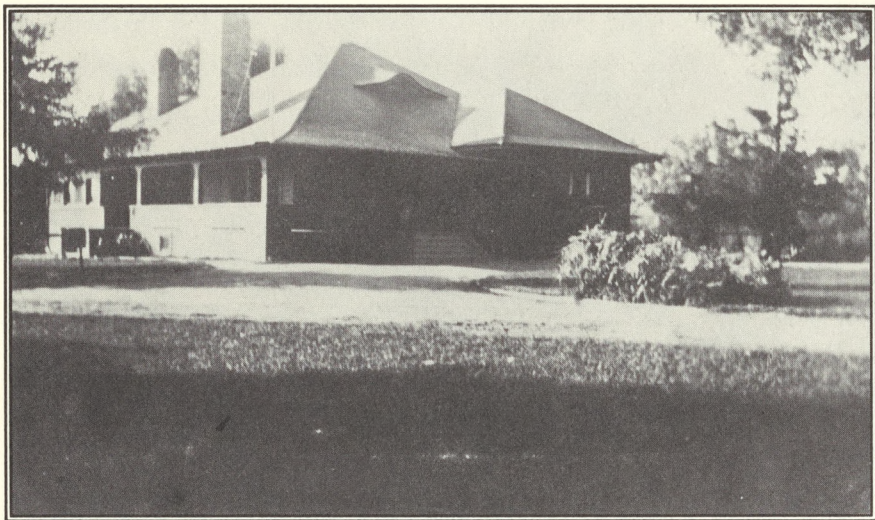
bananas or oranges then wine was brought which I quietly placed in the center of the table as even the smell of it made me sick. Then oatmeal was brought with real cream; after which came a soft boiled egg in a silver receptacle, quail on toast, a lovely piece of porter house steak and a platter of ham also fried potatoes with butter-biscuit and buttered toast. For drink I simply had hot water.

The next course was hotcakes that I declined. After the breakfast I felt better - did not ~~eat~~ eat much but if it had not been very nice could not have touched a thing. Well, I guess you think I'm getting to the Rose's slowly - I thought so when going through the experience, but mama says I never write the details so be patient. At last! the train did come and we had a very warm ride of an hour and a quarter to Montalvo. The first few miles was through the foot hills which look so strangely as they are very rough, pointed. rugged with sharp deep ridges. The country became more fertile and we passed through beautiful oranges groves, olives, pastures of clover. The only noted place was Romona's⁶ [sic] home which I will tell you about when I am home. At M. I left the ~~train~~ cars and boarded ~~the~~ a funny concern of a train of one coach with a small place for baggage. It ran backwards as there was no chance to turn around. As we neared Oxnard I noticed the soft air of the coast and the breeze was so refreshing. At Ox. Mrs. Rose met me with a buggy. She is small, pretty and very sweet. Is very young looking to have such large children. We had a nice little talk about children and schools -- The ride was a mile and a half. As we came in sight of the gate ~~the~~ we could see the children running & jumping. She said they were so anxious to see their new teacher. At the front steps met Mr. Rose who is a very



Oxnard Depot. Courtesy Jane McGrath Aggeler

pleasant man - refined and lives for his family. I went immediately to my room which is up stairs. a nice room with nice furniture. Washed and tidied up a little - and then had lunch. She has a Chinese cook and is a splendid one. Now in regard to the house. It is of Colonial style and rather hard to describe. It is a story and a half so not a large rambling one and being of this style. the ceilings low. A wide veranda going around two sides of the house: the fronts steps leading up being very, very wide. Front door opens into the large parlor and living room and ~~with~~ in this an immense fireplace of brick with a wooden mantle no brick [sic] a brac in the shape of draps [sic] on it as it would not correspond. No carpet but an enormous rug in center with smaller ones at either end. couch, cabinet lovely centre table, piano lamp small tea table with it [sic] accompaning [sic] furnishings, two oblong



Roseland. "A wide veranda going around two sides..."

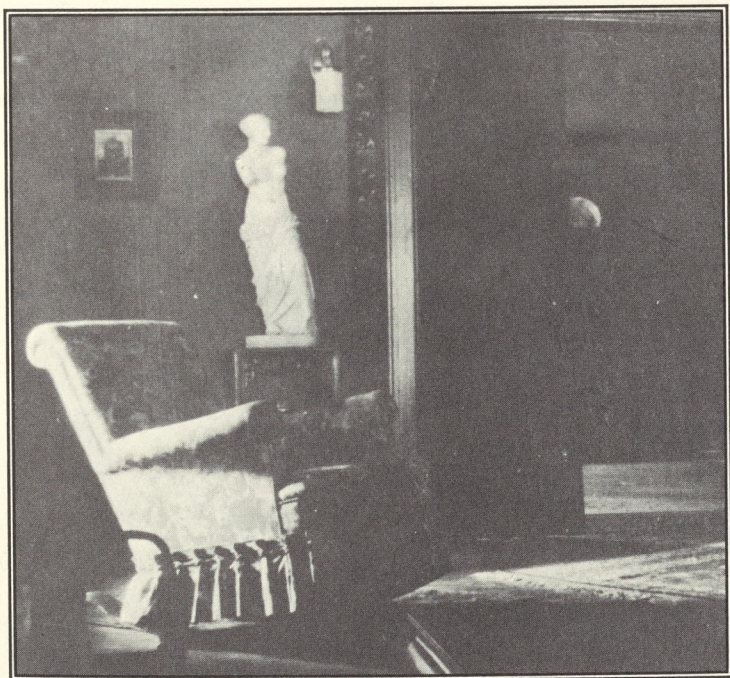
Courtesy Jane McGrath Aggeler

windows with wide sills. The fireplace is in the center of one side of the rooms and from it extend shelves to the corner filled with books. One more piece of furniture. I hardly know what to call it. It is of shelves with two mirrors in the back; filled with pictures, statuary and bric-a-brac. Mrs Rose's secretary - and a lovely Steinway piano complete the furnishings except large comfortable easy chairs and plenty of beautiful pictures on the wall. Some large oil paintings.

Folding doors open into the dining room. It has its usual sideboard: lovely stuffed leather chairs etc. One feature I like so much and that is the silver candle stick of five candles. For the table it gives a soft light and no heat. We have dinner at night. The girls room is lovely but I'll not describe any more.

Now for the children. The oldest which is only a few months

older than Mrs. Rose's oldest however, is a neighbor's child⁷. The mother is dead & was a sister of John and Ada Flourney You remember them at the Univ. She is a lovely child and this year is doing her work here with these children. The eldest is Martha, then comes Hinda, a bright blonde, Fargo - a pretty boy of seven, then the sweetest of all little Gilbert who is only a little over four.⁸ He talks very indistinctly. says only half of a word. very queer. Calls me "Miss Er". Yesterday after noon the children entertained me by showing me over the ranch - The barn, their Shetland pony and cart, the new born kids etc all had to be seen.] It is a ranch of 260 acres. The house yard is surrounded by a hedge of cypress and contains an immense [sic] circular bed with the name



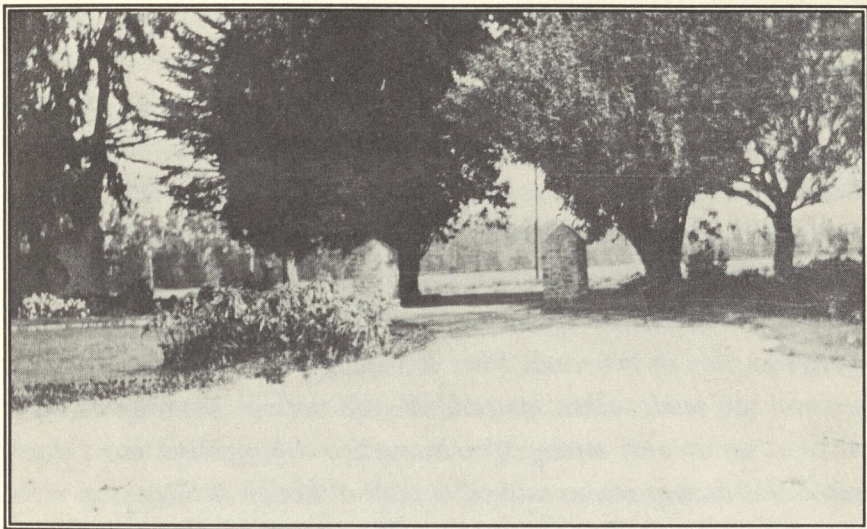
"...filled with pictures, statuary and bric-a-brac."

Courtesy Jane McGrath Aggeler

Roseland in flowers in front and beds on either side. Just think! beautiful umbrella plants grow outside and also two beautiful asparagus ferns. ~~The~~ Heliotrope [sic] and roses are in bloom also lovely Calif. violets. on the east side of the house is the orange grove oh! how beautiful they are as the fruit is ripening, and on the west is the lemon grove. They too I just love to look at. south of the house are the pastures and all this is ~~all~~ surrounded by tall gum trees with cypress planted between them which grow half as high. This is done to break the wind as it blows very hard here. Across the road in front of the house which faces north is two hundred acres of English walnut trees. They are very large and Mrs. R. says very beautiful when in leaf. And again the whole thing surrounded by gum and cypress makes the roads or avenues very pleasant on account of the shade. The climate is perfectly grand although they say it is warmer than usual for this time of year. I really hope so for if this is Jan. weather and heat increases as summer advances it would be intorable [sic]. Mrs. R. says the



"...made of logs and a thatched roof." Courtesy Jane McGrath Aggeler



"Across the road...two hundred acres of English walnut trees."

Courtesy Jane McGrath Aggeler

climate is much better than Los Angeles as we are nearer the coast. The ranch is four miles from the ocean. ~~We are~~ The school house is quite picturesque made of logs and a thatched roof. Mr. Rose made it expressly for a school ~~house~~ room. Seats, blackboards and fireplace. I spent this morning looking over their books deciding where they should begin and arranging the program which was quite difficult. The children are up in their work I think. No physiology in seventh grade however. They are earnest children and anxious to begin their studies again. The little kindergartener will not begin for a little while; his mother is going to send for some material to S. Francisco. I am to teach them music. Martha has no music in her though but tries to do everything as well as she possibly can. This afternoon I was playing for them to sing and she can't even carry a tune.

In my room

Sunday morn.

11.30

Just finished my bath and will write for a few minutes before lunch. After breakfast Mrs. R. and children and myself took a walk to the lower end of the ranch. The children taking their things to play in the sand. Mrs. R. had the "Mill on the Floss" but did not read: talked instead. We did not sit very long as the wind came up very strong. You know how I hate wind but I don't mind this as it is warm and seems soft although it blow [sic] strongly. Before breakfast I was walking in the garden with Fargo. He suggested eating an orange so he selected two large ripe ones. -- What a luxury to be able to step out and pluck the luscious fruit. ~~At present~~ On my bureau are lemon blossoms. At present there are very few out however. In looking over what I wrote yesterday I see I made many blunders which you'll excuse - as I wrote in the presence of the family - amid the noise and talk of the children.

The Chinese is the only servant connected with the house. Most of the outside help have their own camps and small houses.

We were weighed this morn: Mrs. R. tipped the scales at 105 lbs. myself 100. I am taller than she so she looks much plumper. The family are very nice and make it just as pleasant as can be for me. Mr. R. says often to make myself perfectly at home and be one of them. They all think so much of Miss McConnell.⁹ She was with them for two years. We are one mile and a half from El Rio. I have not seen the town yet. I asked Mrs. R. about churches.

she said there was a large Catholic and a Baptist organization. Don't believe they ever go to church. I suppose it is hard with the children. If you have not sent the things don't bother to send the black under-skirt or rubbers. I shall not need them as the sand soaks in rain immediately - and I think soon I will have to wear summer things so will use my white skirts. Rosa's watch was such a comfort - during the journey and will be - all along. I don't seem to see the way to get the gold chain off. Well three of the children have come to my room so will close: It is lunch time. This afternoon I must write to Ida, Edith and Mayme. I really need my green waist so have Mrs. Organ wait for hers. I have nothing to wear on Sundays. Write me everything - and how glad I shall be to receive word from home. With heaps of love to each. I am perfectly happy- as everything could not be better. Write all the questions you desire. Shall write to you Sundays. Your affectionate Anna. I hope mama is well and that she did not overdo too much. I know she did some.

[Written vertically across previous page:]

The berth was extra \$1.00. Tell papa I'm a full fledged traveler now having slept on the train and we'll go East sometime. A.M.E.

[Envelope addressed to:] Mrs. A.M. Earle Coyote Santa Clara Co. Calif. [and postmarked:] "El Rio, Cal. Jan 23 1899"

L. J. ROSE, JR.

The extension of the railroad line from Newhall to San Buenaventura in 1887 brought investors who wanted to benefit from its expected good fortune. One of these individuals was L.J. Rose Jr., who came to Ventura with the large financial backing of his father, L.J. Rose, Sr.¹⁰ and his wife's uncle, C.F. Fargo.¹¹

The Rose family investments included the old flour mill located on Ventura Avenue, thirty parcels (mostly vacant lots on Main Street), and the Rose Hotel at Chestnut and Main streets. The family was instrumental in bringing the improvements of a street railway, a sewer system, gas works and sidewalks to Ventura.

In 1889, Lee Rose bought 260 acres near the town of New Jerusalem¹² in partnership with G.W. Chrisman, J.G. Hill, H.K. Snow, Sr. and George Greenfield. At that time the property consisted of two hundred acres of walnuts, fifty acres of alfalfa and five acres on which there was a small residence and barn surrounded by various fruit trees.

By 1891 the partnership of Chrisman, Hill and Rose bought out Snow and Greenfield, with each partner owning an equal share, or one third. In 1893, Rose bought out the remaining partners for \$157 per acre, naming the ranch "Roseland." Rose constructed a good-sized bungalow-type house with spacious verandas, five bedrooms, ample baths, large dining room glassed in on two sides, an extra-large living room with a fireplace large enough for the children to walk into.¹³ The family moved from Ventura to Roseland in August 1894.

As the Rose children grew, the need for proper schooling became more important. Mrs. Rose would not listen to the children going to school at New Jerusalem, so the idea of a governess presented itself. The first governess, Miss Adelaide McConnell of Alameda, worked for the Rose's for two and one-half years. Miss Anna Reatha Earle was her replacement.



[Letter Number Two]

I'll have Mr. Rose mail this to-morrow if he goes out so you will get it Tues. night.

Saturday. 2 P.M.

My Own dear ones at home:

The disappointment of not being - able to go home, ~~after~~ on Friday after the week's work, was lessened by the receipt of your letter yesterday afternoon the first I've gotten while here. It did seem so nice to be able to sit down - and read about what you all had been doing - and papa's message was fully appreciated too: - after finishing it, ~~all~~ it seemed I had seen you all. So papa can doubt no longer in regard to the money. I can imagine the pleasure it was for you two to set out for town on the errand that you did and being able to settle just what you wished to. I am so thankful that this has happened in your lives for so long it has been my greatest desire to make ~~the~~ your last days ~~of your lives~~ the happiest as far as I could, and what a boost this is. I hope Aunt Mary Ann can look down into our greatatful hearts and rejoice over the blessing she was able to bestow. So mama got embroderies [sic] etc. Well, it makes my heart ache to think of that event but such are the decrees of life. Sister, when you get to cutting into them and have convenient pieces, send samples. So, Jesse¹⁴ had quite a hard time poor boy I hope he will be able to be with you this next week and I know you all will do all you can to make it pleasant for him. Tell him I wish I were there to help add to his

comfort but I think Rose will be equal to two sisters. Don't you, sis?

I have just washed my head Mrs. Rose had rain water so that was nice, - and am sitting in the window which is on south side of the room so it is drying very rapidly.

Mrs. Rose and Miss Flournoy¹⁵ (went) drove to Ventura yesterday morn. and returned late in afternoon. Was introduced to her - and had quite a chat about the Univ. & its life, her sister Ada, and brother who is now practising [sic] law in San Francisco. She is a very sweet woman and much like her sister: same complexion and style. We commented upon the fact that Miss Flournoy was one of my first teachers and now am instructing her neice [sic] Merrill: This sister has taken charge of the house hold since her sister's death. Merrill, 12 years old to day is the youngest She has I believe ~~at~~ two older sisters and a brother. One sister is at Mill's College. They are a very aristocratic and wealthy family - and the two families are very intimate. I mean the Rose's and the Rice's. Mrs. Rose seemed so pleased over the connection between myself and Miss Flournoy. Can we not see where so many times my having been a Univ. student has helped me? A girl who goes out into the world needs something to give her prestige: money, "high connections" or schooling and mama was wise enough to see that years ago. Merrill is a most lovely child. I enjoy her work so much and she seems to, too. Said she always hated Arith. but now she likes it. Has always had governesses. It being her birthday, the two girls Martha and Hinda started ~~at~~ a little after nine this morning in their donkey cart to spend the day. Each had a dainty little gift for her. The three girls are one and I love each of them already. Merrill comes to school on horse back. She lives 2

1-1/2 miles from here. After her arrival in the mornings & the taking off of her riding skirt we sing at the piano for ten minutes play a march - ~~then~~ they march around the center table several times, through the dining room and side - door then break out into a laugh and bound to the school room, I following and the work begins. I have the program satisfactorily arranged and if you believe it I am hearing a recitation every minute of the day. Have morning recess but none in the afternoon and dismiss at three. Fargo leaves at 2 o'clock. ~~Our course calling.~~ We expect Gilbert's materials to-morrow so he will begin his mat weaving etc Monday if nothing happens. The children need a great deal of drill especially in Arith.

They are average children mentally but very nicely behaved and not in the least spoiled. So there is no disciplining to do to speak of. Fargo is extremely slow in his work as he sits and listens to the older girls - So as to make up his work last Fri. he lost half of his recess and had to stay 45 min.- after his usual time in the afternoon. Each morning before school, Martha and I take one of the rooms and brush it (up). The parlor, two bedrooms and sewing room which is also used as nusery [sic] for the boys: The Chinaman takes care of the rest of the house. Each has a large center rug, which I sweep with the carpet sweeper while Martha picks up or removes from the floor ~~the~~ small articles of furniture and shakes the smaller rugs. I, then turn up the edges of the large one, - and sweep the floor using sort of a brush with a handle. It is done quickly. Mrs. Rose does the dusting afterward. Saturdays, I help Mrs. R. dust and tend to my own room. This afternoon I left this letter and helped her do the mending which took a short

time only.

After school on Mondays and Thurs. I give the girls their half-hour lessons. Their mother had simply started them. Martha has not a particle of music in her but tries very hard - and will accomplish something. Our dinner is at six - and an hour before I generally am out with the boys. Often while hold of Gilbert's hand he will say, "Run Miss Er, please do," - and away we go. So this morning I was looking at my drawers and really they are black. The sand makes a dust I suppose. Really I should change twice a week so if Rosa could finish that pair that is cut out and make another I would be glad to have them. It would be nice work while Jess is there (?) Evenings I have just read with an occasional play with Gilbert.

From this on I shall make it a point to get an hour's practise [sic] in before dinner.

I believe I did not speak of the children's dogs in my last letter. One is a beautiful St. Bernard that I am really afraid to play with - as he is so strong, a hound that is the most affectionate dog I ever saw, a bulldog and a pretty white and brown pointer.

Rosa spoke of the wind. Well, last Sunday and Monday the wind blew a gale and filled the atmosphere with sand. You have no idea how disagreeable it was: furniture just covered with sand. The next day and ever since the weather has been perfect only the last few mornings a little colder so that we had to have - a little fire in our school house which looked very cheery - and - also in the big fire-place in the parlor.

Mrs. R. was up in my room to-day so showed her my photos. She looked long and earnestly at mama's - and then went back to

it. Said the mothers always interested her - and thought I had a lovely one and spoke particularly of the eyes. Thought sister a pretty girl. If Rose has her pictures taken be sure to send one.

I was weighed last Sunday by Mrs. R. It was rather funny: with the 50 lb. weight and the guage [sic] at 50 the lever staid [sic] up. with the 100 weight & at one or nothing it staid [sic] down so we concluded I was exactly 100 lbs. Mrs. R. weighed 106. I went out to the barns this afternoon and the scales balanced 101-3/4 so you can see what I have gained this week. I feel perfectly- well - and the meals are just splendid. So nicely cooked and always changes. At noon there is invariably a salad and some kind of hot bread. delicious rolls or corn bread or something of the sort besides meat of some kind with one kind of vegetable. At night either roast or chicken etc. with something good for desert [sic]. In the mornings, I enjoy the cream for the mush.

I am perfectly happy and I could not find a nicer family in Calif. So I think I - am greatly blessed. I - don't care to write to Mrs. Godell.- and certainly not to Allen. Give her my love - and tell her I ~~am~~ how pleasantly I - am situated - Give it as a message from me and that will take the curse off ~~the~~ of not writing. I feel sorry for the old lady after all. Give my love also to Rinda and Fannie Tell Rinda my wrapper is fine and it is just the thing for mornings. I like it for the plainness [sic] as it makes it suitable for the work. The things you sent Friday, I'll not get till Mon. as there is no express office at El Rio so it will be taken off at Montalvo and a postal sent to me here at El Rio, so what ever you send hereafter by express, address Oxnard as Mr. Rose goes there oftener than Montalvo and is nearer. When you send the silk waist, send what kids¹⁶ you can find - as we all use candles for

the bedrooms. I suppose I could have a lamp but thought I would not bother with the iron while here as it would ~~not~~ be better for my hair. When sister is in S.J.¹⁷ she might get some larger ones two or three. You will not forget the old shoes, belt covered with braid for my navy blue - and you might send another tablet. and if Rose goes in town get a box of good paper and envelopes. Also send Miss Halsey's P.O. box No. - No I have not heard from Bro. Charles. Wonder if he is sick. The other night at the dinner table Mr. R. told the history of the former governess. something having been said to bring up the subject. He prefaced his remarks however by saying, Miss Earle, we like you or I would not be telling you of her. Seems she was quite young and had a fellow that she had to write to every night - and somehow had lost track of him when she immediately lost all appetite, took no interest in school Never spent an evening with the family - and was a failure all around etc. I ~~know~~ I feel they are satisfied anyway with me. So there is satisfaction in that. Dont for pity sakes read this rambling letter to anyone. Love to each one. How about Carrie? I forgot to speak about her last time and so did you. Give her a kiss and tell her to be a good girl. Your affectionate daughter and sister Anna.
Write Wed's and I'll get it Fri. P.M.

[Written on half-sheet of paper:]

Sunday. 7.45. Good Morning!

On Sundays we have breakfast at 8 o'clock during the week 7.30. I was thinking while dressing, that when you paid for the lot and Mr. S. would be familiar enough to ask where you got the money, I hope you will not give him any satisfaction. Say that you

have the use of some money or something of the sort. I feel that it is none of the Coyotes' business to know our affairs.

When you send the package you might put in a few hair pins and a few ~~invisible~~ invisibles. Has Rosa written to Ida yet? I wrote to her, also Mayme, Edith and Onie. Good girl wasn't I? I do hope you are all well. Mama did not say how she felt.

Good Bye.

Lovingly, Anna.



[Letter Number Three]

Roseland, Mar. 4.

Saturday 5 P.M.

My dearest ones at home: ---

This is the first chance I've had to write to day for I've been entertaining the little Roses the whole day.

To explain this, Mrs. Rose is sick in bed. Taken rather suddenly. Last Monday did not feel well and her husband sent for the doctor who came in the evening and said she must stay in bed as week as he thought she was threatened with nervous prostrations for she has had several spells of that kind.

Wed. the doctor made another visit - and said she would have to have an operation performed as it was internal trouble and the next day accompanied by another one of his fraternity, he came & did the work. It was not a serious one as no knife was used but since the operation she has been weak & has had to have the house

kept as quiet as possible. Will have to stay in bed three or more days yet. Dr. Bard¹⁸ had dinner with us last night and I believe he calls on Mrs. R. to night again. He is a lovely old gentleman but alas! has a wife.

The girls have had to take turns from their school work to stay with their mother. which has interrupted considerable [sic]. I thought I would clean ~~this~~ living room to day as I would have more time than on school days but when I awoke I saw we were in for another wind storm and it would be of no use for everything gets covered with sand and Mrs. R. said also it was useless so we just straightened around - and then the girls wanted me to help make some caps or rather bonnets for their dolls that they have been dressing - It resulted in my doing it all and took from lunch time till four o'clock and the last hour have been sitting with Mrs. R. while the girls were out for a play in the fresh air as they have been housed quite-a bit lately. This morn had the two boys in my room for an hour trying to keep them still while I was straightening my room. So I'm teacher, nurse, mother and everything else combined.

I received your letter that was written Sunday, Monday afternoon and Mr. R. did not get the package till yesterday for me. How can I thank you mama, for all. The waist is just lovely! I slipped it on before I went to bed last night and it fits splendidly. Will change the loops on the collar and that is all. I like the style so much and isn't the yoke and collar pretty? It was a great deal of work, though, to do all that tucking. It lights up at night beautifully. The belt and finish of the sleeve is real cute. The shirt waists are very nice. The navy blue will be nice for common wear and the pink is very pretty. But don't it seem extravagant to

pay \$2.25 for two waists for the Earle's but mama will have plenty of sewing to do as it is. The flannels are all right too -- just what I wanted. I feel quite rich in letter paper now - and am pleased with the "Bank Stock".

Mama's expected letter came Friday afternoon also the p'k'g of stockings and collar.

I wrote to Mr. Walker that I would accept if the vacancy occured [sic] and if the certificate would be recognized. in that Co. I think I would enjoy working with him.

Am so glad that there is such encouragement shown in these meetings! I felt like writing almost, to Bro. Peters and wife. I hope sister is feeling better - and able to help Bro. P. - as she could do so much. I do think she and Jess will be so happy together - and if they lay the foundation for a Christian Home right in the beginning it will please me ~~so much~~ greatly as and I know nothing would make F mama feel better. What part does Allen take in these meetings? Does he seemold interested? Well, Millie's prospects of marriage is indeed a bit of news. I wonder if they are all proud of her. Allen won't have any house when his turn comes.

Mrs. Godell has not written that letter yet. Don't you know, I feel rather sorry for her. I surely hope George is converted. That ought to make Allen happy. I do wish Rose would write. It will be two weeks Mon. (I think) since I've heard from her. She must tell me all about her S.J. trip. If she went to the King Conservatory etc.

How long is Emma going to stay with you? Has she any plans for the future?

You - did better - in regard to samples this time but yet, you

have not sent one of the new dining room curtains. Rosa's material for a comforter is very pretty. Is she going to make it herself? You ~~have~~ did not - answer all my questions in my last letter. You read it over if you have not destroyed it. When does Carrie go? I received - a letter from Mayme this week and she starts for L.A. the 7th next Tues. Yes I've been teaching music to the girls until this last Mon. we stopped on account of Mrs. R.'s illness. When does Rose see Jess again and where?

Rosa's dress is pretty and will be serviceable this summer. And I think the pillows must add a great deal to the room.

Have not heard from Bro. Chas. He is not a very ardent lover is he? Well, I shan't grieve over it -- I'm too old for that.

Sunday Morn

The East wind is just raging. This wind always brings warm weather. The storms generally last three days. This is the second one we've had since I've been here. The wind either blows from the east or west instead of north and south as at home. Mr. Rose brought from El Rio last night a dog, Danish, a year old to be added to the list of 4 dogs the children already have. But they make over him as though they never saw one before. The children are purely countrified in their ideas & tastes. That is they're not grown up - are pleased with simple things. Fargo has been crowded too much - and too fast for his years. He possibly can't do the Fifth Year work next year for his mind is not developed to grasp the work. I suppose his mother will feel greatly disappointed - Did Rose see Mrs. Putnam? She asked me to write and let her know how I liked everything but I have not had the time and if Rose has

seen her I shan't do so at all. Although its only nine o'clock, Mr. Rose has gone and I suppose will stay till mail time which is about noon so this will not get mailed today. Two mails go out - one at eight in the morn & four P.M. & if a letter goes on the latter train you get it the next day at night.

[Written vertically at top of preceding page:]

Am well. Will- go to the barn before I seal this & see what I weigh. Hope Rose has written before you get this. I expect she has a great deal to do in that line but she must not neglect me even for Jess as much as I like him. Good by with love to each.
Anna.

After luncheon.

Just tipped the scales at 104 so have made up & more than I lost. I saw this picture or advertisement on the back of "Munsey's" (Mrs. R. takes it and "Harper's Weekly") - and to me it looks like sister, especially- above the mouth. How does it strike you? Of course I mean it resembles her just at a glance. Is there any silk left to my waist? Expect I'll have to have another collar as this will soil easily. I don't mean before I get home] Mr. Rose has been to Ventura & back and may yet go to El Rio so will say Good Bye & have this ready. Anna.

[Written vertically at top of page:]

How are the Flewellings or have you heard lately? What letter did you give her to read. I scribble so terribly to you folks that they are not readable for any body else.



SHORTLY AFTER ANNA WROTE THIS LETTER IN MARCH 1899, certain events happened that would change both her world and that at Roseland. In May of that year the patriarch of the Rose family, L.J. Rose, Sr.¹⁹, died suddenly. It cast a somber mood at Roseland.

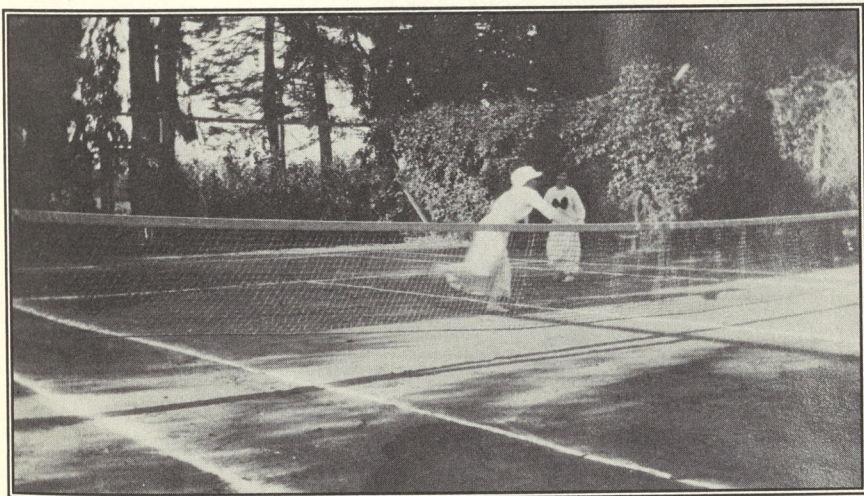
Anna left Roseland that spring to return to San Jose where she took a position teaching school. While continuing her teaching duties, she spent time caring for her mother during her illness. Her mother passed away in February of the following year. The following fall she married Alexander Van Valin in September 1900. Anna lived a long and fruitful life and died at the age of 97 in Modesto on January 17, 1971.

The L.J. Rose, Jr. family continued to live at Roseland for another eleven years. In 1909, the eastern half of the ranch was sold to the McGrath Estate Company. One year later the remainder of the ranch was sold to the McGrath's for \$550 per acre. At that time the ranch consisted of seventy acres of walnuts, with the remainder allocated to beet and bean land.

At least four hundred people, coming from all sections of the county, attended the L.J. Rose auction of farm equipment and supplies held at Roseland on November 19, 1910. The total sales amounted to \$7,500. A sumptuous barbecue of choice meats flanked with chile sauce and hot coffee was enjoyed by all who attended. Members of the L.J. Rose family relocated to San Diego.

Joe McGrath, Sr. made Roseland his home and raised his family

at the ranch. The log schoolhouse of the Rose children was used as a playhouse for the children, then later as the ranch office. The McGrath's altered the interior of the house as well as the outside porch.²⁰ They eventually removed the tennis court²¹ that was there when the ranch was purchased, planting the area to avocados. In 1948, when the McGrath estate was divided, the small office at the Rose ranch was the focal point for all those concerned with the division of that vast estate. Family members and business associates gathered in that office to draw cards to see which valuable property would go to each family. After that day the 248 acre Rose ranch passed on to the Frank McGrath estate, whose heirs own it today.



"...planting the area to avocados."
Courtesy Jane McGrath Aggeler

THE LETTERS OF ANNA REATHA EARLE: *AN AFTERWORD*

By Hope Smalley, Library Docent

Sometimes the story of the "material behind the story" is as interesting as the story itself. Such is the case with the letters of Anna Reatha Earle. On a day in August 1988, while I was on duty in the Library, Mrs. Emilee T. Crowley of Newbury Park came in. She had with her three letters written by her grandmother, Anna Reatha Earle, while she was a governess for the family of L.J. Rose, Jr., in El Rio. The envelopes were addressed to her mother, Mrs. A.M. Earle, Coyote, Santa Clara County, California, and were written between January 23 and March 4, 1899. Mrs. Crowley wondered if we were interested in the letters. Were we ever!

The letters remained in my work station while I, as cataloger, decided what to do with them. Periodically I would look for photos and/or mention of the Roses, etc. The matter rested for some time. We had a change in librarians and when our new Librarian, Charles Johnson, also became editor of the *Quarterly*, I mentioned the letters to him. It happened that Craig Held was in the Library that day and knew the house and some family history. It intrigued him and he "picked up the ball," building on the research already accumulated.

As we continued to gather information, I attempted to contact Mrs. Crowley who had since moved to Middletown in Northern California. I was able to trace her through the docents at the Stage Coach Inn in Newbury Park. Mrs. Crowley was thrilled to think that the letters would be published and she agreed to send more information on her grandmother. She promptly sent the Library several more pictures, a family tree, and a narrative of Anna Reatha's life previous to her employment and afterwards. So our sincere appreciation for information on Anna Reatha Earle goes to her granddaughter, Emilee T. Crowley of Middletown,

California, and to Anna's daughter (Emilee's mother), Rose Van Valin Trogden, who lives next door to Emilee, and with whom she consulted for some of her information.



Anna Reatha Earle Van Valin
Courtesy Mrs. Emilee T. Crowley

NOTES

1. Located south of Stockton.
2. Anna's sister.
3. Aunt Anna P. Rendell was married to Charles H. Rendell, who was Almira M. Earle's brother.
4. Mary Ione Rendell, Anna's cousin.
5. F. "Van" Allen, Mary Ione Rendell's soon-to-be husband; they were married in Tulare.
6. Camulos Rancho east of Piru, scene of Helen Hunt Jackson's fictional work *Ramona*.
7. She was Merrill Rice, the daughter of Thomas Rice, a neighbor of the Rose's whose wife, Lillian Flournoy Rice, died in September 1897, leaving her husband to raise four children; Merrill was the youngest.
8. Martha was born August 8, 1886, Hinda on June 30, 1888, Fargo, August 19, 1891, and Gilbert on October 11, 1894.
9. The previous governess, Miss Adelaide McConnell of Alameda.
10. L.J. Rose, Sr. was a pioneer settler of the Pasadena area, where he came to live in 1860. He eventually developed his two-thousand acre Sunny Slope Ranch into a premier showplace of vineyards, orchards and champion horses.
11. C.F. Fargo, the uncle of Fannie Fargo Rose, wife of L.J. Rose, Jr., was a resident of the San Francisco area. He made a vast fortune in the wholesale whiskey business, and invested in real estate and other businesses such as the Rose Hotel. He died February 25, 1900, at the age of 81.

NOTES

12. Later El Rio.
13. Rose, L.J., Jr. *L.J. Rose of Sunny Slope 1827-1899*. San Marino: Huntington Library, 1959 (209-10).
14. Jesse Snyder, who married Anna's sister, Rosa.
15. Sister-in-law of T.A. Rice.
16. "Kid" hair curlers.
17. San Jose.
18. Dr. Cephas Bard.
19. "Venturians were greatly startled Wednesday when a telegram was received from Los Angeles stating that L.J. Rose, Sr., had committed suicide in that city by taking an overdose of morphine. It was known that he was in financial straits, and he left a letter for his wife giving this as his cause for taking his own life." *Ventura Free Press*, May 19, 1899 (1-6).
20. Joe McGrath, Jr., oral interview on November 14, 1990.
21. One of the earliest tennis courts in Ventura County.

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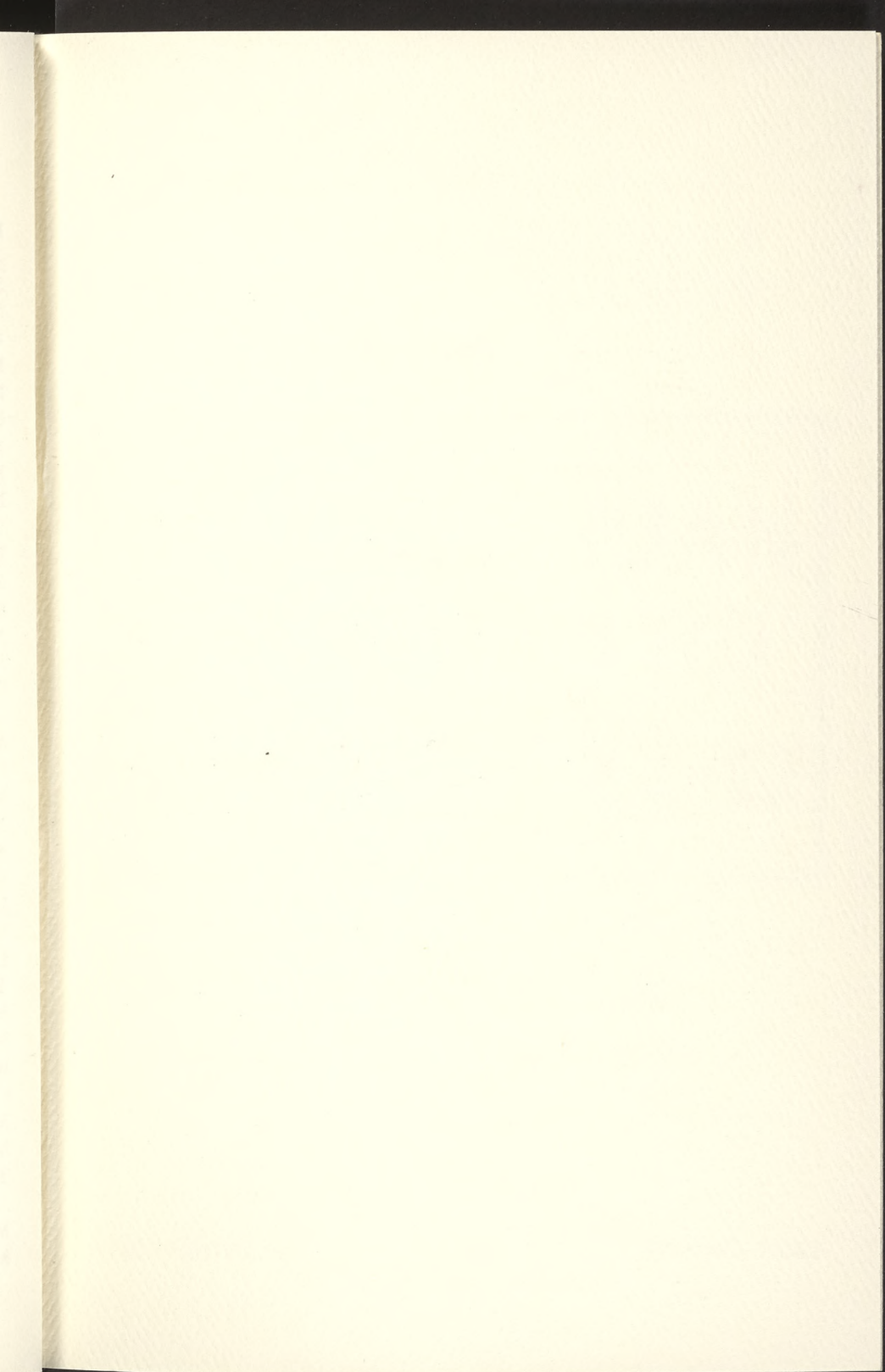
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Father John Comaplá:
Catalan and Californian

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THE
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IN MEMORIAM
GRANT W. HEIL

Quarterly Editor 1964-1984
For His Dedication to the History of Ventura County

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Marin Williamson describes herself as "a native Californian and a near-native Venturan." She was educated at Ventura College (1960), San Francisco State University (1962) and Glendale College of Law where she received her Juris Doctor in 1977. She also studied theology at St. John's Seminary Theologate in Camarillo.

Ms. Williamson is a member of the State Bar of California and a former research attorney for the Court of Appeal, State of California, Second Appellate District.

For the past five years she has dedicated herself to writing, historical research and travel. She is an enthusiastic (and occasionally delinquent) patron of the E.P. Foster Library and enjoys striding up La Loma de la Cruz at dawn or along the Promenade at sunset.

She wishes to thank the scores of persons in both California and Catalonia who assisted in this project, especially Californian Alberta Word and Catalan Ramon Llongarriu.



This issue of the *Quarterly* is dedicated to Catholic priest Mossén Martiría Pla of Santa María de Batet, whose exemplary generosity, hospitality, intelligence and humor enlightened the author as to the Catalan regional character and enlivened her search.

COMAPLÁ: CATALAN AND CALIFORNIAN

A Portrait of Father John Comaplá, Pastor of
Mission San Buenaventura from 1861 to 1878
and Namesake of Padre Juan Canyon

by
MARIN WILLIAMSON, J.D.

INTRODUCTION

THE BIOGRAPHY OF FATHER COMAPLÁ IS THE STORY OF a young man from a Catalan peasant family who came to California as a missionary-priest during a watershed period in our history. It is the story of a man for all people who gave generously of himself, his possessions and his energy in pursuit of his priestly calling. It is the story of someone deeply imprinted by the regional characteristics of Catalonia who adapted well to the demands of life in pioneer California. It is also the story of a complex, authentic, individuated human being who can be glimpsed beneath the accounts of almost mythic saintliness: a vigorous man of intellect and humor, of warmth and sociability, of hopes and ambitions, of struggles and failures, who grew to maturity in San Buenaventura and enthusiastically poured forth the best of himself until he became ill, declined and died before he reached his fifty-fifth birthday.

EARLY YEARS & EDUCATION

Comaplá was born on May 10, 1823¹ in the small village of Batet de la Serra, near Olot² in the Catalanian region of

Northern Spain. The baptismal record of the parish church as translated³ reads in part:

On the 11th of May, 1823, was baptized in the baptismal font of the church of Santa María de Batet, Diocese of Gerona...Joan⁴ Isidro Joseph, born the day before, legitimate and natural son of Joan Comaplá, peasant of Batet, and Francisca Serra,⁵ from Beguda, married....

Comaplá was the fifth-born of six siblings and the second and last son.⁶

He was confirmed, at the age of three years, on August 8, 1826, also in the Batet parish church.⁷

The Comaplá family is listed in the sacramental books of the tiny church of Santa María de Batet back to the first available volume: a Narcis Comaplá, son of Joan and Rosa Comaplá, was baptized there on February 14, 1582.⁸

The Comaplá family home, still standing today, is a large three story structure built of porous charcoal-colored stone from nearby volcanoes, roofed in mottled terra cotta tile and surrounded by rolling green fields much as it may have been when Comaplá left it over a hundred years ago.⁹

It is unclear exactly when young Comaplá left home to live in Vich, where the Comaplás had relatives.¹⁰ Benjamin Cummings Truman, a journalist who visited the priest at San Buenaventura sometime between 1867 and 1872, however, wrote that Comaplá was a "native of Vich, Spain,"¹¹ suggesting that Comaplá had gone to Vich quite early in his life.

It was the practice in Catalonia in the 1800s for the clergy to educate the children. They often selected talented children for further studies and the diocese of Vich was a highly desirable venue for a priest.¹² It may well have been that Comaplá was a

student of exceptional ability and was therefore sent to Vich to be educated. In any event, Comaplá did attend the seminary at Vich, not Gerona,¹³ although his family continued to live in Batet in the Diocese of Gerona. Since the Vich seminary records for the pertinent time period were destroyed during the Spanish Civil War, it is impossible to document Comaplá's school and seminary years.¹⁴

One may speculate, however, that he was a gifted student in view of later writers' comments on his intellect: Truman described Comaplá as "a person of brilliant attainments," with "a very good library" of works by "Plato, Carlyle, Macaulay, Scott, Cowper, and Gray."¹⁵ Thomas Bard described Comaplá as "an educated man"¹⁶ and Captain Mighels of Nevada, who visited the Mission in 1873, made note of Comaplá's "many curious black-lettered old Spanish books."¹⁷

ORDINATION & PRIESTHOOD

On May 3, 1853 Comaplá, then in Vich, wrote the bishop of Gerona describing himself as a sixth year student of theology and sacred scripture at the seminary, and requested permission to transfer to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Monterey [California].¹⁸ Permission was granted accordingly.¹⁹

On May 9, 1853 the pastor of Santa María de Batet certified that Comaplá was of legitimate birth, had led a just and exemplary life, was healthy and of good habits, reputation, condition, education, and application, and without any irregularity or canonical impediments.²⁰

Subsequently Comaplá's presence is documented in California as he prepared for ordination to the priesthood: the first entry is on December 15, 1853, when he received minor orders.²¹ He was ordained to the priesthood on January 1, 1854 by Bishop Alemany, a Catalan from Vich.²²

On March 13, 1854, the newly-ordained Father Comaplá was appointed pastor of Missions Santa Inés and La Purísima Concepción as well as vice-rector of the small seminary at Santa Inés²³, Our Lady of Guadalupe.²⁴

On April 24, 1856 Comaplá was appointed pastor of Mission San Luis Obispo²⁵ by another Catalan -- Bishop Amat.²⁶ Comaplá served there until November 9, 1861, when he was appointed to San Buenaventura.²⁷

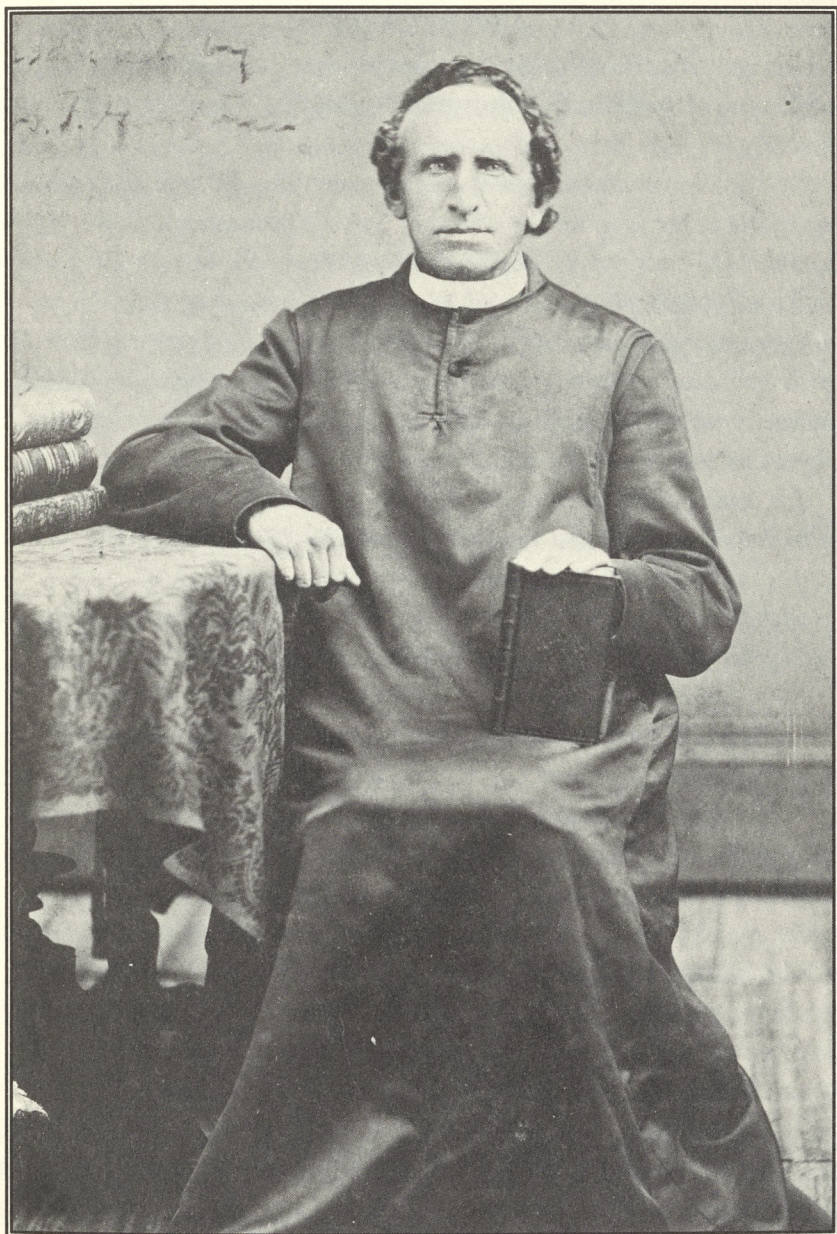
MISSION SAN BUENAVENTURA PASTORATE & PERSONAL MATURITY

The best introduction to Comaplá's pastorate at San Buenaventura is to be found in Sol Sheridan's remarkable statement:

...Padre Juan would give the coat on his back to any man who might need it. His own needs counted, with him, for nothing at all. There was even a tale that he had once given away his only trousers to a naked man: himself wearing long robes of the priest to cover his body.

And it was absolutely true that on one occasion, when the women of the parish determined to supply him with a new suit of clothes, they sent the tailor to take his measure and make the clothes and deliver them to the priest; well knowing that if they gave him the money to pay for the suit he would use it to supply the needs of his poorer parishioners. ²⁸

A review of all that has been recorded of Comaplá's pastorate at San Buenaventura indicates that he demonstrated personal traits of generosity, tolerance, hospitality, patriotism, humor and progressiveness. Many of these traits may have had their roots in his Catalan origin.



Father Comaplá

GENEROSITY

Generosity seems to be a regional characteristic of Catalans²⁹ and Comaplá exhibited it abundantly. Sol Sheridan further stated:

In 1861 came the best loved, and in some ways perhaps the most remarkable of the long line of priests of San Buenaventura, Father Juan Comaplá. His rule, gentle, benign, always seeking the best for his people, lasted until 1876. No man in all the sleepy old village of San Buenaventura was more highly regarded than this good priest. His parish embraced everything between Rincon Creek and San Fernando, and never did he hesitate to go upon a call, however long nor however fatigued he might be by his labors....

*He drove an old surrey and might be seen at any time, night or day, on the rough roads of that time going about his parochial duties....*³⁰

Sheridan is not the only writer to have commented on Comaplá's dedication. Adelaide Comstock spoke of it as well :

...[Comaplá's] name [is] still held in reverence though his earthly labor closed some years ago....

*...Mrs. [Rachel Gilbert, a Protestant] often spoke of the many kindly acts of Father John in the way of self-sacrifice...[one of the Gilbert daughters] said, 'I remember during a very dry season when there was greater scarcity among the poorer class of natives, and Mother gave all the relief in her power to the general need; knowing the self-denying disposition of Father John, when she sent me with a bowl of soup or other food for his own special nourishment, she would charge me to stay and see that he ate it; otherwise it was most likely he would give it all away though hungry himself.' It is said of him that he could hardly be relied on as to a coat; it found its way to the back of one he thought more needy.*³¹

Among the many manifestations of Comaplá's generosity were his dedication in bringing the sacraments to outposts such as the Del Valle holdings at Rancho Camulos and ministering to other *Californio* families, his cordial relationship with the Protestants, and his kindness and warmth toward the natives.

CALIFORNIOS

According to Wallace E. Smith, friends and neighbors of the Del Valles came once a month to Mass at Camulos, usually celebrated by Comaplá.³²

In *This Land Was Ours: The Del Valles and Camulos*, Smith writes further about Comaplá's ministry at Camulos:

*On March 15 [1865] the Yndarts returned to Camulos for [Ulpiano José Federico's] baptism by Padre Juan Comaplá of Mission San Buenaventura....*³³

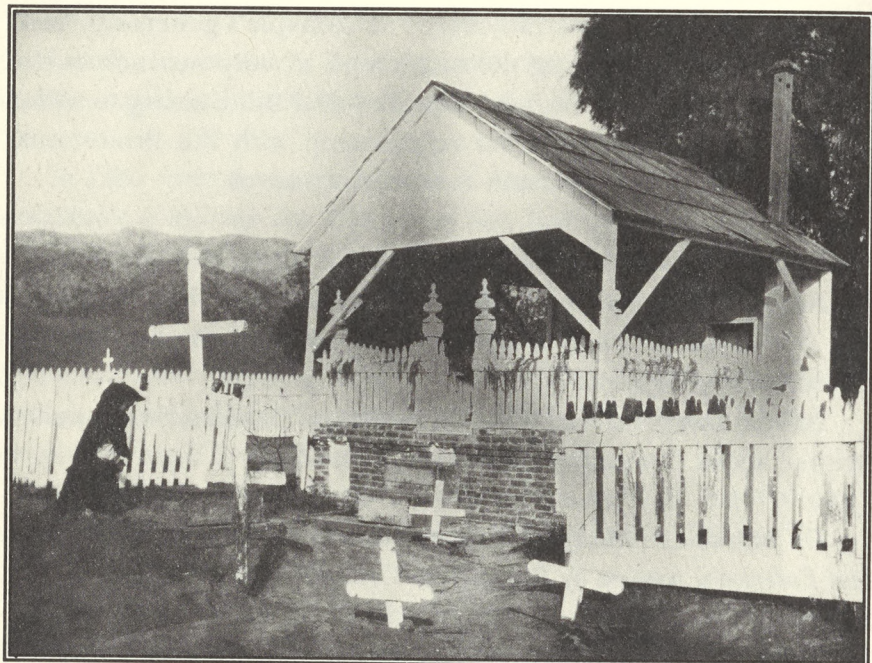
*When Cesario José Ramiro del Valle contracted whooping cough in September 1866...Father Comaplá hurried to Camulos to baptize him before it was too late...four days later [Comaplá] returned to bury the child in the little Camulos graveyard.*³⁴

*...[Ysabel's] seventh son, Nachito, was baptized by Father Comaplá in January 1871 ...*³⁵

*[Benjamin José Blas del Valle] was ...baptized by Father Juan Comaplá in November [1872] ...*³⁶

*The [Camulos school] prizes and an address [were] delivered by Father Juan Comaplá.*³⁷

On May 10, 1873 (Comaplá's 50th birthday), the *Ventura Signal* printed a speech about George Washington recently given by one of the Del Valle sons (probably future state legislator Reginaldo) at Santa Clara College where he was a student. It had been brought to the *Signal* by Comaplá.³⁸



"...Comaplá returned to bury the child in the little Camulos graveyard."

In addition to traveling the long distance to Camulos to administer the sacraments and preside at school exercises, Comaplá is also known to have gifted books to the Del Valles.³⁹

Comaplá also officiated at many important weddings, such as the marriage of José de Arnaz's son Luis and Guadalupe Dryden on May 20, 1876 which the *Signal* described thusly:

*The ceremony, under the auspices of Rev. Juan Comaplá [and] performed in the venerable old church amid the dim religious light of a summer twilight, with all the sacred solemnity with which the Holy Mother church invests this sacrament, was very impressive.*⁴⁰

By the mid 1870s there was a joke that Methodist minister Rev. William A. Knighten and Father Comaplá performed all the



Chapel at Rancho Camulos

marriages in the county, although there were several other ministers in the area.⁴¹

PROTESTANTS

According to Adelaide Comstock:

[Father Comaplá] was beloved and respected by Catholic and Protestant alike to the extent that sect was ignored and a Presbyterian's child [Jessie Gilbert Dunshee] was baptized by a Catholic priest, that child being a daughter of George Gilbert, one of the earliest pioneers and later 'chief cornerstone' of the first Protestant church built in Ventura...

...Father John's name was a household word in the [Gilbert] family....⁴²

Not only did Father Comaplá baptize a Presbyterian, it appears from Thomas R. Bard's "Pioneer Letters" that Comaplá may have allowed some of the Mission premises to be used for services given by an Episcopal minister every other Sunday afternoon.⁴³

As will be seen below, Bard writes about Comaplá's inclusion in a group of oil men at a Fourth of July celebration.⁴⁴ George Gilbert, Comaplá's friend and pillar of the Presbyterian church mentioned above, was the first oil man in Ventura.⁴⁵

NATIVES

During the years of Comaplá's ministry, the Mission was still composed primarily of native parishioners: according to E.M. Sheridan there were only "a very few Spanish and Mexican families."⁴⁶ Thus we can assume that in large part it was the natives who benefitted from Comaplá's dedication.

His generosity apparently included a tolerant attitude toward his parishioners' weaknesses. Bard wrote that Comaplá frequently mentioned that " ... his people have very good faith but very poor works as for instance: they come to him, confess their sins, are absolved; and immediately proceed to his hennery and steal a chicken or two...."⁴⁷

Similarly, it is said that he was particularly devoted to and favored native children. For example, Comaplá temporarily recorded baptisms in a small notebook which he later entered in the formal parish sacramental records. Once he was unable to locate it and had to make the entries from memory. The entries were accompanied by a note in which he affectionately attributed the notebook's absence to his "muchachos" that is, the parish youth.⁴⁸

Amazingly, Comaplá may have been one of California's first "single fathers." The Justice Court records show that on April 21,

1866 he appeared before Fernando A. Tico, Justice of the Peace, along with a nine year old native boy "Juan" and his mother, "Policarpia," for the purpose of obtaining custody of the boy. Judge Tico stated in the docket that, "After a complete and explicit examination of the material, it appears satisfactory before me that no force has been employed to obtain said child from his mother ... [and there is] no valid objection ... hence I certify that said Rev. Juan Comaplá is authorized to have the care, custody, control ... of said minor ... until he reaches 18 years of age."⁴⁹

Comaplá is also described as being tolerant of the indigenous people's love of religious ritual with pagan undertones. According to the Adelaide Comstock material:

*The kind hearted padre had ever been indulgent with the natives as to carry out the primitive customs in celebration of festivals, such as the torch-light procession to the cemetery on All Souls' eve when, with singing and accompaniment of violin music, flowerladen they wended their way from the old mission to the silent city on the hill to perform the beautiful rite of decorating the graves of the arisen souls. The observance of Corpus Christi was also, in Father John's time, accompanied with more elaborate ceremony.*⁵⁰

Another writer described the 1873 Corpus Christi celebration under Comaplá:

*In the garden altars were built and decorated with flowers. The music for the occasion was furnished by a choir and orchestra composed of old mission Indians. The chants were set to some original Indian airs and were accompanied by the orchestra, which used the ancient instruments from 1786, consisting of a drum, violoncello, two violins and a flute.*⁵¹

The record of Comaplá's relation to the natives is not, however, entirely devoid of criticism (merited or not). Chumash Fernando Librado complained that, "...the Indians requested Father Juan Comaplá to come over to say mass at María Pomposa's fiesta, but when he arrived he did not say mass, for he saw that he would get nothing out of it."⁵²

The "fiesta" referred to was a traditional Chumash celebration that lasted five days and involved, among other things, passing around small "cakes," one of which contained poison and killed the unlucky recipient.⁵³

Librado also describes an incident where he was translating into Chumash for Comaplá who had come to minister to a dying native:

When the last of the sacraments had been given, Fr. Comaplá asked the old man if he knew where any treasures had been buried. In response the old man answered: 'There is nothing that I may tell you as to this which will be of profit to you.' The dying man then told me in Chumash that if he were to tell this priest, nothing would ever go to me. So the old man refused to say anything about it.

*The priest then asked me to ask the old man if he was content of heart. The old man answered yes and added, 'May all of you live in peace!' These were his last words. The priest then blessed the dead man.*⁵⁴

Even Librado was not entirely negative about Comaplá, however, describing him as a "very liberal man."⁵⁵

This liberality may have been reflected in the continued participation during his pastorate of the native mission band despite the members' advanced age and its mixed reviews from the general public.

E.M. Sheridan offers this description:

When I came here [1873] there were half a dozen or more of these Indians who could be relied upon to play and to play well. There were violins, a drum, base-viol, a triangle, a flute made of a gun barrel which was made to give up sweet music. There were those who sang well. I remember hearing them play and sing and the effort was worth while, though now and then there would be a wild or half-wild note slip into beautiful songs⁵⁶

Other writers were less enthusiastic, however. The Ventura Signal for March 21, 1874 stated:

The old Mission band, with catgut, resin, and drum made...the 18th last, hideous.

In a few years the old band will 'lay down fiddle and bow' after fifty years of scraping and drumming;



"The old Mission band, with catgut, resin and drum..."

*We will be sorry to hear of the death of any members of the band, but shall be consoled with the reflection that they have ceased to torture us with their horrid scrapings of poor Tom's intestines.*⁵⁷

Captain Mighels was equally unimpressed:

*The choir ... consisted of two octogenarian Indians, dressed like two poverty-stricken Piutes. One of these had a fiddle in his hand, and with that instrument and his own voice and the aid of that of his brother, in sacred harmony, made the responses. There was another instrument standing upon the floor of the gallery. It was a base drum. There used to be quite a numerous band of these aboriginal church musicians. Without doubt they used to head the procession when the mission priests issued forth with the sacred hosts. Now they are dismal, mummified, sepulchral of tone, antediluvian and almost absurd.*⁵⁸

HUMOR

In keeping with his generosity and tolerance, Comaplá seems to have had a lively sense of humor that balanced his self-sacrificial nature. Truman described him as being a "very pious, but an altogether delightful man."⁵⁹

On February 17, 1865, Thomas R. Bard wrote of his arrival in San Buenaventura and first encounter with Comaplá:

I paid my respects to the Padre who speaks English tolerably well. He expressed his gratification to know my intention of becoming a neighbor, and wished me success. In the course of our conversation I used some Spanish words I had picked up here and there. He seemed pleased with my endeavor to acquire the language, which led me to remark that I found it so similar to the Latin language that I could translate almost any writing I saw, but expressed a difficulty to get the pronunciation. 'Now,' said he, 'let me give you some good advice, Señor.

*There is no use to consult a printed dictionary, a speaking or pronouncing dictionary is what you want, and the best pronouncing dictionaries are the Señoritas.*⁶⁰

Chumash Fernando Librado also describes a humorous incident involving Comaplá:

*Once Sinforoso, a Ventura Indian, asked [Father Comaplá] if he wanted to see a **Kushi** dance. The priest told Sinforoso that he had never heard of that kind of a dance, nor did he know what it meant. The Indian explained that the name was 'Devil.' The priest replied: 'If you dance the Devil Dance a second time, just let me know.' What he said caused much merriment among the Ventura Indians.*⁶¹

PATRIOTISM

Patriotism appears to be another regional characteristic of Catalans.⁶² In Comaplá, the characteristic seems to have attached itself to his new country -- America -- despite his family's centuries-old connection to one tiny village in Catalonia.

According to Truman, Comaplá had an engraving of George Washington hanging in his study⁶³ and carried a copy of the patriotic poem "Barbara Frietchie," by John Greenleaf Whittier.⁶⁴ It told of a ninety year old woman in Frederick, Maryland: after everyone took down their Union flags as the Confederate Army approached, she raised hers. The confederates then riddled it with bullets. She caught it up and, at risk of imminent death, steadfastly held it as the confederate troops marched past.⁶⁵

Comaplá's patriotism had an odd wrinkle, however: despite his fondness for Whittier's anti-Confederate poem, Comaplá seems to have been an avid admirer of confederate generals. According to Truman, he also had engravings of Stonewall Jackson and Robert

E. Lee which he "pointed to with marked respect" and "whom he looked upon ...as great soldiers and good men."⁶⁶

Similarly Captain Mighels wrote that Comaplá had in his private room "a chartlike portrait of Jeff Davis and his generals, duly illuminated with blue and green and yellow pigments and labeled 'Our Heroes.'"⁶⁷

Comaplá's fondness for rebel generals may also relate to his Catalan roots: Catalonia has never been too firmly integrated into the Empire of Castile. A strong separatist sentiment still lives among its people and their patriotic ardor attaches itself more to their own region than to Spain as a whole.⁶⁸

In any event, Comaplá was at an Independence Day party with Americans Bard, Gilbert and others on the 4th of July 1866. According to Bard:

*Fourth of July was a great day in the Mission ... I sloped with a stray party of oil men with whom I spent an evening ... after our own taste, but with proper decorum as an evidence of which I might mention the presence of **Sénor Padre** Juan Comaplá, the holy pastor of the place.*⁶⁹

Moreover, when the first big San Buenaventura 4th of July celebration was being prepared in 1871, Comaplá offered the use of the Old Mission orchard, under the olive trees, and when it was held he "spoke in Spanish, delivering a patriotic talk which was pleasing to the Spanish-speaking part of the audience."⁷⁰

Furthermore, Comaplá actually became an American citizen - he was naturalized on October 6, 1876 (the Centennial year) and subsequently registered as a voter.⁷¹

It bears mention that Comaplá was one of the few people in town who could speak both Spanish and English. E.M. Sheridan wrote that when he came to town in 1873, Comaplá and Angel

Escadon "were the only two Californians who could speak English, and their services were constantly being sought as interpreters."⁷²

HOSPITALITY

Truman described his visit with Comaplá as follows:

I spent a day or two with [Comaplá] ...and I found him a good entertainer. I can call to mind one of his dinners,⁷³ which included roasted quail stuffed with bacon and ripe olives, brook trout in the purest of olive oil, and a pot pie of cotton tail rabbit and ripe olives, which was made all the more delectable by a dessert of strawberries swimming in a heavy native claret wine and green almonds sliced or minced in saucers of old sherry.⁷⁴

Captain Mighels also commented on Comaplá's hospitable kindness to him during his visit.⁷⁵

PROGRESSIVENESS

Comaplá was at once a good manager and a forward looking individual as can be seen from his care of the Mission property as well as his foundation of new church-related entities.

MISSION PRESERVATION & RESTORATION

One of Comaplá's first tasks was to raise again the fallen Serra cross on La Loma de la Cruz.⁷⁶ Another was to shingle the roof since the old tile one had fallen in with the earthquake of mid-1850s.⁷⁷

Apparently it was Comaplá who had the Mission brick floor covered with wood, leaving the *ladrillo* undisturbed. Captain Mighels reported when he visited the Mission in 1873:

*...the San Buenaventura church is in a much better state of repair than most I have seen, its outside having been newly whitewashed and the floor having been relaid with redwood planks recently.*⁷⁸

The purpose for covering the tile was probably not cosmetic alteration but comfort. According to E.M. Sheridan:

*In the days of the brick tile floor there were no pews, the worshippers bringing pieces of matting or skin with them to mass on which they knelt and worshipped.*⁷⁹

There were additional efforts on Comaplá's part with regard to Mission property: In 1873 he offered to rent Mission premises to the newly incorporated county government as a meeting place, but a meeting place behind a saloon was selected instead.⁸⁰ On June 21, 1873 the *Signal* reported that the Mission was replastered.⁸¹ On November 21, 1873 the *Signal* noted that a new organ had been installed⁸² and on January 6, 1877 the *Free Press* mentioned a new brick entry.⁸³

ST. MARY'S CEMETERY

According to Weber, it was during Comaplá's pastorate that the new cemetery was established:

*The property for the parish cemetery...was acquired...in 1862...Ynez Sanchez was the first one to be interred in the 'cementerio nuevo.' She was buried by the Rev. Juan Comaplá on October 21, 1862....*⁸⁴

Prior to this, the Catholic burials in San Buenaventura had been adjacent to the Mission Church. According to E.M. Sheridan, "[In] the old cemetery ... it is said 3850 bodies, mostly Indians, were interred. There were no burials [there] after 1861."⁸⁵

SANTA CLARA CHURCH

It was Comaplá who was responsible for the founding in 1876 of the "Station" at El Rio (called "New Jerusalem" at the time) which later became Santa Clara church.⁸⁶

Five acres of land were purchased from Christian Maulhardt for the purpose and Comaplá recorded the deed on September 25, 1876.⁸⁷ The first Mass was celebrated by Comaplá in autumn of 1877, although the station was not officially opened until March 27, 1878, after Comaplá's death.⁸⁸

UNREALIZED PLANS FOR COLLEGE

E.M. Sheridan related that as early as 1873 Comaplá wanted to establish a college on the mission orchard land where instead the first courthouse was erected:

It had been practically settled upon that a Catholic college should be built at San Buenaventura.

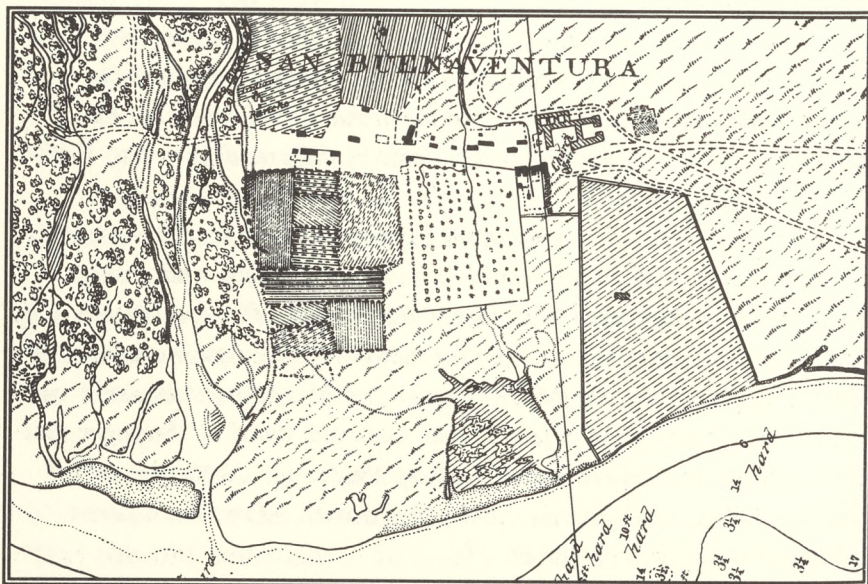
...The Mission Orchard of some seventeen acres had long been abandoned as an orchard and with the town encroaching on it the church had made up its mind to put the orchard four blocks on the market. These lots were advertised for sale by the presiding priest, Father Juan Comaplá.

*They were being slowly acquired by purchase at a very low price when the county made up its mind to have a courthouse and Bishop Amat, as his contribution, and that of the church, offered a site [on May 5, 1873]. According to the **Signal** of that date there was one strenuous objector to giving the site for the courthouse where it was built, this objector being the parish priest. Father Comaplá stated in the paper that in his opinion the church had better keep the site for the then proposed Catholic College and give the county the Mission lot on Main Street adjoining the church on the east.⁸⁹*

Elsewhere Sheridan referred to an 1874 edition of the *Signal* which indicated that Comaplá still had hopes for founding the college despite the fact that the courthouse had been put up on his chosen location:

*Padre Juan is in favor of selling the church lot on Main Street and holding the church property near the courthouse for the college soon to be built.*⁹⁰

However Comaplá ran a rather poetic advertisement in the December 19, 1874 *Signal* offering to sell "lots in the Mission Garden according to the plots made by order of Rt. Rev. Bishop Amat."⁹¹ (It had been Amat who in November 1872 had decided to subdivide the mission orchard).



Mission San Buenaventura and orchard (center), 1855

Again in the April 1, 1876 *Signal*, Comaplá ran a large advertisement offering "beautiful lots" in the "Mission Orchard" on reasonable terms.⁹²

As late as January 27, 1877, the school idea was still being pursued:

We learn that Father Comaplá intends selling a portion of the church property fronting on Main Street a few feet west of Palm Street. With the proceeds of this and the orchard property it is expected to establish a convent here shortly. If as we presume a school should be attached it would be a fortunate thing for the town and county, obviating the necessity of sending girls away from parental control to receive an education.

*Almost without exception those Catholic schools in this state are first class in order of merit.*⁹³

THE CANYON

About eight miles north of San Buenaventura there is a north-south running canyon which begins at Red Mountain on the north and opens out onto the sea at Pitas Point on the south. Both at the head and at the mouth of the canyon there were Chumash villages in pre-Mission times⁹⁴ and this area continued to be used by the natives after missionization: Chumash leader Juan de Jesus had a ranch at the mouth of the canyon in the 1800s.⁹⁵

In a small grove of oaks at the head of the canyon there are some boulders with small cup-like indentations made by decades

FOR SALE.

LOTS

In the

**Mission
Garden,**

according to

THE PLOTS

Made by order of Rt. Rev. Bishop
Amat.

Apply to
REV. JUAN COMAPLA,
35:4t San Buenaventura.

of use by native women for grinding acorns. These are termed "bedrock mortars."⁹⁶ Now small amounts of rich, fragrant humus formed by decaying leaves and wind-borne soil can be found fermenting in the abandoned mortar holes.

An abundance of plant and animal life has been hosted by the canyon as well as such interesting natural phenomena as an asphaltum seep and a sulphur blow-out which emanated from the side of Red Mountain.⁹⁷ It was here that Comaplá once had a ranch.

According to Sol Sheridan:

*Padre Juan [Canyon] ... received its name from [Comaplá]; and he once owned a very beautiful ranch in the head of that [canyon]. The creek, and the point of land there, also, carry his honored name. The produce of his ranch...was always given away in charity.*⁹⁸

Interestingly, Comaplá received at least a part of the land he held in the canyon from the federal government. Bureau of Land Management records contain a document executed by President Ulysses S. Grant on August 20, 1874 giving Comaplá title to 160 acres found in portions of sections 14 and 115 of Township 3 North, Range 24 West [San Bernardino Meridian] pursuant to the Morrill Act which provided land grants to the states for colleges for the study of agriculture and mechanical arts. The land in the canyon was designated for the benefit of the state of Virginia.⁹⁹

However, these 160 acres did not comprise the entirety of Comaplá's holdings in the canyon. A few days before he died, Comaplá executed deeds conveying his real property -- a one half interest to Bishop Mora and a one half interest to Anton Maulhardt. In these deeds were described his entire real estate holdings in the canyon and they encompassed portions of sections 13 and 22, as well as additional portions of sections 14 and 15.¹⁰⁰

Bishop Mora later conveyed his half interest to Anton Maulhardt whose estate in turn sold the entire holdings to the Hobson Brothers. When the latter transaction took place the property was described as "generally known and called the Padre Juan Rancho, containing in all 440 acres."¹⁰¹

Interestingly, all of this real property appears to have been school land grant holdings at one time. In addition to the land which Comaplá patented in 1874, the deeds to Bishop Mora and Anton Maulhardt described certain of Comaplá's holdings in sections 13, 14, 15 and 22 as "state school lands," and the remainder of his holdings in sections 15 and 22 as "government land patented to Michael Gilbert and afterward conveyed to Juan Comaplá."¹⁰²

Comaplá apparently kept livestock on the ranch as he had already executed a deed on December 11, 1877 conveying to Bishop Mora all his animals and personal property.¹⁰³

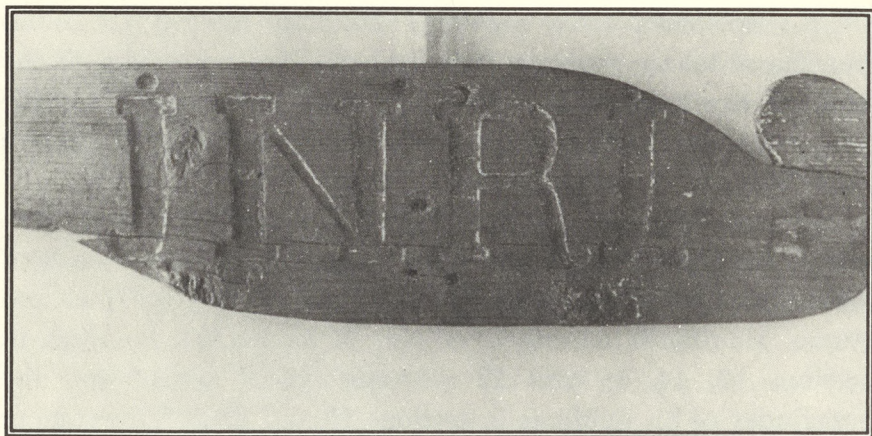
He also had a garden and an orchard which may have been on the ranch. Truman describes it as follows:

*...there were 20 acres of walnut, almond, olive, pear, and palm trees, and watermelons weighing 100 pounds, corn 19 feet in height, castor bean and elder bushes from a foot to eighteen inches in diameter, pepper, acacia, and magnolia trees, and a squash which weighed exactly 250 pounds. From this garden he had green peas and strawberries every month in the year.*¹⁰⁴

There is no mention or sign, however, of there having been any dwelling on the ranch.¹⁰⁵

ILLNESS AND DEATH

On November 2, 1875 -- "The Day of the Dead" or "All Souls' Day" -- there was a rainstorm and a severe high winds



" ... a souvenir of the visit ..."

which caused the Serra cross to fall a second time. The *Signal* for November 6, 1875 stated "Father John informs us that [the cross] will be immediately restored to its old place."¹⁰⁶

The hundred year old cross, however, was weatherbeaten and fragile. It had been broken apart by the fall and lay in pieces on the ground. José de Arnaz, who had once leased and later sold his interest in the eleven leagues of land surrounding the Mission, went up to the hill with his young daughter, Ventura. Ventura, it is said, wanted a souvenir of the visit and took the heart of the cross -- the piece bearing the inscription "INRI" [acronym for Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews].¹⁰⁷

E.M. Sheridan later wrote:

*...the cross was not replaced for many years. It was found too much time-worn to erect at the time, and the Mission was not strong in those days. Energetic Americans of the Faith were not many. The presiding priest himself was not physically a well man, for it was not long after that he left the Mission and passed away from his illness.*¹⁰⁸

The November 17, 1877 *Signal* reported that the old adobe wing of the Mission also had fallen -- of its own accord. The *Signal* had started a campaign on February 7, 1874 to get Comaplá to tear it down; now they urged him to carry off the debris.¹⁰⁹

It is not difficult to find a metaphor for the decline of both the Spanish influence and Comaplá's own health in the subdividing of the once-thriving orchard, the shattering of the cross and the crumbling of the adobe wing: more than one writer described the end of Comaplá's pastorate as the end of the Spanish era. Adelaide Comstock wrote that "... with Father John's retirement the ancient regime seemed closed."¹¹⁰

Edith Hobson Hoffman wrote of the last great bullfight and dance on San Miguel's Day, September 29, 1873, and of Comaplá's inability to raise the cross again in 1875. She concluded, "Thus...passed away the Spanish village and in its place grew the prosperous modern American city."¹¹¹

Although historical records indicate that Father Comaplá continued to hold the position of pastor and to perform ministerial functions from time to time up until the end of his life, it appears that during the last year or so he was steadily failing from his illness and did not have the energy for his past level of activity. Moreover, he was probably hospitalized during portions of this time, thus he is often described as having retired a year or two prior to his death.

Comstock wrote, "Father John left on account of declining health and died at Los Angeles two years later, having removed there for medical treatment of his infirmity."¹¹²

Although there was some speculation in the press that Comaplá's illness was cancer of the stomach,¹¹³ according to the death record it was "consumption" (tuberculosis),¹¹⁴ a disease common to the natives.

The 1878 Death Index for the City of Los Angeles reflects that Comaplá's was the first death there that year.¹¹⁵ He died on January 11, at noon¹¹⁶ -- the hour of the crucifixion and the Angelus. It was only a few days past the 24th anniversary of his ordination and little more than 16 years after he had been assigned to Mission San Buenaventura.

Comaplá was attended by Dr. Manuel Fernandez, a homeopath, located at 144 Spring Street in Los Angeles.¹¹⁷ Ironically, Dr. Fernandez also treated Bishop Amat, who had been ill since late 1872 and who died only a few months after Comaplá.¹¹⁸

According to Truman, Comaplá always carried with him a worn copy of the poem "The Water Mill" by Sarah Doudney.¹¹⁹ It is a poem about using every moment positively so that one will have no cause for regret at the end. One line exhorts "O love thy God and Fellow Man / Thyself consider last" and the refrain is "The mill will never grind/with water that has passed."¹²⁰

Oddly, on January 12, without any apparent connection with Comaplá, the *Signal* carried the following as filler:

Life is a stream which continuously flows down and never returns. We die daily, for each day takes away some portion of our life; the day which is past is gone forever; the present moment only is our own.

The same day, the *Signal* carried Comaplá's obituary:

Died ... Comaplá -- On the 11th instant, at Los Angeles, Rev. Juan Comaplá, aged about 50 [sic] years. Father Juan, as he was familiarly known here, has been the Priest of this parish since 1863 [sic]. He was universally beloved by his people. He assisted greatly in all efforts to build up the religious, material and social interests of his church. Many valuable improvements in the church property have been

*made under his supervision and judicious care. Father Juan will be sadly missed by his many friends of all classes.*¹²¹

Bishop Mora, who had been Bishop Amat's coadjutor since May 20, 1873,¹²² made this entry in the diocesan personnel records:

After 14 months of illness, with magnificent resignation [to the will of God] he received the sacrament of the sick in the hospital of the Sisters of Charity in Los Angeles. Then this excellent priest died in God on January 11 and after that his body was carried to the cemetery of the parish on January 12, 1878.

*Rest in Peace.*¹²³

The location of his grave is unknown.¹²⁴



Padre Juan Comaplá, Mission San Buenaventura 1874

NOTES

Abbreviations

- VCHS Ventura County Historical Society
VCMHA Ventura County Museum of History & Art

1. Primary research by author; see also Francis J. Weber, *A History of San Buenaventura Mission* (San Buenaventura: San Buenaventura Mission Gift Shop, 1977), 81.
2. Batet de la Serra is 6 km. from Olot at an altitude of 658 meters and currently has about 300 inhabitants. The primitive Romanic church of Santa María was documented for the first time in 977; see *Gran Geografia Comarcal de Catalunya* (Barcelona: Fundacio Enciclopedia Catalan, 1981-85), vol. 3.
3. Translated from the Catalan by doctoral candidate (history) Sylvia Planas, Gerona, Catalonia, Spain.
4. "Joan" is Catalan for John.
5. Weber, *History*, 81.
6. Baptismal records of Santa María de Batet.
7. Parish records of Santa María de Batet.
8. Baptismal records of Santa María de Batet.
9. The author located and visited the Comaplá home in February 1990. It is set on a land holding of 12 hectares.
10. Sacramental books at Santa María de Batet refer to relatives living in or near Vich, an ancient Iberian city with a Romanesque cathedral and a second century Roman temple still extant. The author visited the city in February 1990; see also Catherine Mervyn, *A Tower in the Valley: The History of Santa Clara Church* (Oxnard: Santa Clara Church, 1989), 26.

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11. Benjamin Truman Cummings, *Observations on the El Camino Real*. Edited by Francis J. Weber (Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1978), 52. Cummings is most often remembered for his *Semi-tropical California: Its Climate, Healthfulness, Productiveness, and Scenery* ... (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft & Company, 1874).
12. Francis J. Weber, *Francis Mora: Last of the Catalans* (Los Angeles: Dawson's Book Shop, 1967), 3.
13. Weber, *History*, 81.
14. Personal communication between author and Dona Ignacia, Archivist, Diocese of Vich.
15. Truman, *Observations*, 52.
16. Thomas R. Bard, "Pioneer Letters," VCHS *Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 2 (winter 1981), 14.
17. Edwin M. Sheridan, "Historical Writings" (Ventura: s.n., 1920-1930). 9 looseleaf volumes. Vol. 4, 124 (photocopy of Ventura County *Star*, April 15, 1929).
18. Document in San Francisco Chancery Archives.
19. San Francisco Chancery Archives.
20. San Francisco Chancery Archives.
21. Liber A Gubernii of the Diocese of Monterey-Los Angeles, 1853, 96, located in the San Francisco Chancery Archives.
22. Liber A Gubernii, 1854, 10, located in the San Francisco Chancery Archives. See Weber, *Francis Mora*, x, 3, 53, for Bishop Alemany's background; see also Weber, *History*, 81.

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23. Libro Primero de Gobierno, 23, located in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.
24. Regarding this seminary see Francis J. Weber, *A Century of Fulfillment: The Roman Catholic Church in Southern California, 1840-1947* (Mission Hills: The Archival Center, 1990), 41-42.
25. Libro Primero de Gobierno, 28, Archives of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.
26. Bishop Amat was a native of Barcelona. See Weber, *Francis Mora*, x.
27. Libro Primero de Gobierno, 36, Archives of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.
28. Sol N. Sheridan, *History of Ventura County*, vol. 1 (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1926), 62.
29. Marin Williamson, "No Limit to Generosity of Catalans," *National Catholic Reporter* (November 9, 1990), 2.
30. Sheridan, *History*, 62-63.
31. Adelaide Comstock, "Mission San Buenaventura," *VCHS Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 4, (summer 1981) 17-18.
32. Wallace E. Smith, "Ventura County's Russian Bell," *VCHS Quarterly*, vol. 9, no. 3, (May 1964), 19.
33. Wallace E. Smith, *This Land Was Ours: The Del Valles and Camulos*. Edited by Grant W. Heil. Ventura: Ventura County Historical Society, 1977.
34. Smith, *Land*, 143.

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35. Smith, *Land*, 144.
36. Smith, *Land*, 153.
37. Smith, *Land*, 160.
38. *Ventura Signal*, May 10, 1873, 1, col. 2.
39. Correspondence with Thomas Marshall, S.J..
40. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 1, 109 (photocopy of September 27, 1927 *Ventura County Star*).
41. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 1, 257 (photocopy of December 23, 1925 *Ventura Weekly Post*).
42. Comstock, "Mission," 17.
43. Bard, "Letters," 16.
44. Bard, "Letters," 13-14.
45. W.D. Hobson, "History of Ventura County," *VCHS Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 3 (May 1968), 14.
46. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 6, 11 (photocopy of December 29, 1923 *Ventura Weekly Post*).
47. Bard, "Letters," 16.
48. Personal communication to author by Herlinda Carney.
49. Justice Court Docket (San Buenaventura, 1862-1867), 101-102; translated by the author. This document is in the VCMHA Library Collection.

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50. Comstock, "Mission," 19.
51. Edith Hobson Hoffman, "The Romantic History of San Buenaventura," *VCHS Quarterly*, vol. 15, no. 4 (August 1970), 11.
52. Fernando Librado, *Eye of the Flute* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, 1977), 107.
53. Fernando Librado, *Breath of the Sun*. Edited by Travis Hudson (Banning and Ventura: Malki Museum Press; Ventura County Historical Society, 1979), 29.
54. Librado, *Breath*, 39.
55. Librado, *Breath*, 51.
56. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 4, 122 (photocopy of January 15, 1925 *Ventura Weekly Post*).
57. *Ventura Signal*, March 21, 1874.
58. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 4, 124 (photocopy of April 15, 1929 *Ventura County Star*).
59. Truman, *Observations*, 52.
60. Bard, "Letters," 6.
61. Librado, *Breath*, 51.
62. Williamson, "Generosity," 2.
63. Truman, *Observations*, 52.
64. Truman, *Observations*, 52.

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65. See Elizabeth Hough Seachrist, *One Thousand Poems for Children* (Philadelphia: Macrae-Smith Company, 1946), 334.
66. Truman, *Observations*, 52.
67. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 4, 124 (photocopy of April 15, 1929 *Ventura County Star*).
68. See James Michener, *Iberia: Spanish Travels & Reflections* (New York: Random House, 1968), 541, 561-563, 606, 727.
69. Bard, "Letters," 13-14.
70. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 4, 124 (photocopy of July 11, 1928 *Ventura County Star*). See also *History of Santa Barbara County, California ...* (Oakland: Thompson & West, 1883), 353 for a description of the rather startling parade that took place that day.
71. *Great Register, Ventura County* (Ventura, 1873-1878), handwritten by Herbert F. Richard; see also "Ventura County Centennial," *VCHS Quarterly*, vol. 27, no. 2 (winter 1972), "Padre Juan Canyon."
72. Sheridan, "Writings": vol. 1, 257 (photocopy of December 23, 1925 *Ventura County Star*); vol. 4, 122 (photocopy of January 15, 1925 *Ventura Post*).
73. The meal was typically Catalan; see Coleman Andrews, *Catalan Cuisine: Europe's Last Culinary Secret* (New York: Macmillan, 1988).
74. Truman, *Observations*, 52.
75. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 4, 124 (photocopy of April 15, 1929 *Ventura County Star*).

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76. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 3, 89 (photocopy of April 7, 1928 *Ventura County Star*).
77. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 4, 122 (photocopy of January 15, 1925 *Ventura Post*).
78. Sheridan, "Writings": vol. 4, 124 (photocopy of April 15, 1929 *Ventura County Star*); vol. 4, 122 (photocopy of January 15, 1925 *Ventura Post*), and vol. 4, 120 (photocopy of October 16, 1922 *Ventura Post*). Compare with: Zephryn Englehardt, *San Buenaventura: The Mission by the Sea* (Santa Barbara: Mission Santa Barbara, 1930); 140, Sol Sheridan, *History*, 63; Norman Neuerburg, "New Light on the Church at San Buenaventura," *VCHS Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 4 (summer 1983), 17. Each of these authorities differ from the other.
79. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 4, 122 (photocopy of January 15, 1925 *Ventura Post*).
80. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 7, 118 (photocopy of December 6, 1927 *Ventura County Star*).
81. *Ventura Signal* June 21, 1873.
82. *Ventura Signal*, November 21, 1873. See also: Sheridan "Writings," vol. 6, 174 (photocopy of January 29, 1924 *Ventura Signal*); vol. 4, 122 (photocopy of January 15, 1925 *Ventura Post*).
83. *Ventura Free Press*, January 6, 1877.
84. Francis J. Weber, "Eulogy for a Country Graveyard," *VCHS Quarterly*, vol. 26, no. 1 (fall 1980), 13.
85. Sheridan, "Writings": vol. 4, 120 (photocopy of October 16, 1922 *Ventura Post*); vol. 4, 148 (photocopy of March 31, 1927 *Ventura County Star*).

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86. Catherine Mervyn, *Tower*, 14-16.
87. Mervyn, 16.
88. Mervyn, 20, 24.
89. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 2, 125 (photocopy of March 17, 1923 *Post*; see also "Court House," VCHS *Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 3 (spring 1973), 29.
90. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 6, 174 (photocopy of January 29, 1924 *Post*),
91. *Ventura Signal*: December 19, 1874, 3, col. 4; November 16, 1972, 3, col. 1.
92. *Ventura Signal*, April 1, 1876, 2, col. 3.
93. *Ventura Free Press*, January 27, 1877.
94. Personal communication from Robert López and Bertha Blanco. According to anthropologist López, the results of whose archeological work in the Canyon will soon be available through the Ventura Archeological Society, the head of the Canyon contained two locations comprising one village that functioned as a seasonal gathering station. According to Bertha Blanco, Pitas Point was known for the music made by the young men living at both the mouth and the head of the Canyon. When stagecoach travelers heard the music they knew they were near Ventura.
95. Personal communications from Bertha Blanco and other local Chumash descendants; Librado, *Breath*, 128.
96. Personal communication from Robert López; personal observations of author.

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97. Henningson, Durham & Richardson, "Environmental Impact Report Padre Juan Canyon Class I Sanitary Landfill, Ventura County, California" (Santa Barbara, 1974); personal observations of author; conversations with Harold, Harper and Whitney Ormsby and Rita and Scott Braun.
98. Sheridan, "Writings," 63. See also Librado, *Breath*, 172.
99. Bureau of Land Management document dated August 20, 1874.
100. Deeds recorded in Ventura County on January 7 and 14, 1878, Bk. 5, 611 and 632.
101. Deed recorded in Ventura County July 2, 1899, Bk. 56, 353.
102. Deeds recorded on January 7 and 14, 1878, Bk. 5, 611 and 632.
103. Deed recorded in Ventura County January 14, 1878, Bk. 5, 631.
104. Truman, *Observations*, 52-53. Truman does not state the location of the garden. The presence of pear and other trees suggests the mission orchard. However, many sources described the rundown nature of the mission orchard, which was subdivided in 1872. From this it can be speculated that Truman was referring to the Canyon. It must be borne in mind, however, that Truman visited no later than 1872 and the federal land was patented in 1874 although it may have been utilized earlier.
105. Personal observations of the author.
106. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 3, 68.
107. Sheridan, "Writings," 89. This "souvenir" is now part of the VCMHA collection.
108. Sheridan, "Writings," 89.

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109. *Ventura Signal*, November 17, 1877, 3, col. 1.
110. Comstock, "Mission," 19.
111. Hoffman, "History," 11.
112. Comstock, "Mission," 19.
113. *Ventura Signal*, January 5, 1878, 3, col. 1.
114. Death Index for the City of Los Angeles, 1878,
115. Death Index for Los Angeles, 1878.
116. *Ventura Free Press*, January 12, 1878.
117. Los Angeles City Directory for 1881.
118. Weber, *Century of Progress*, 254-255.
119. Truman, *Observations*, 52.
120. See Hazel Felleman, *Best Loved Poems of the American People* (Garden City: Garden City Publishing Company, 1936), 343-345.
121. *Ventura Signal*, January 12, 1878, 1, col. 7, 1, col. 1.
122. Weber, *Francis Mora*, 8.
123. Translated from the Latin by Rev. Nicolas Garcia.
124. The author has been unable to locate any burial record regarding Comaplá at San Buenaventura Mission, St. Mary's Cemetery, Calvary Cemetery, The Old Plaza Church, San Gabriel Mission or St. Vibiana's Cathedral.

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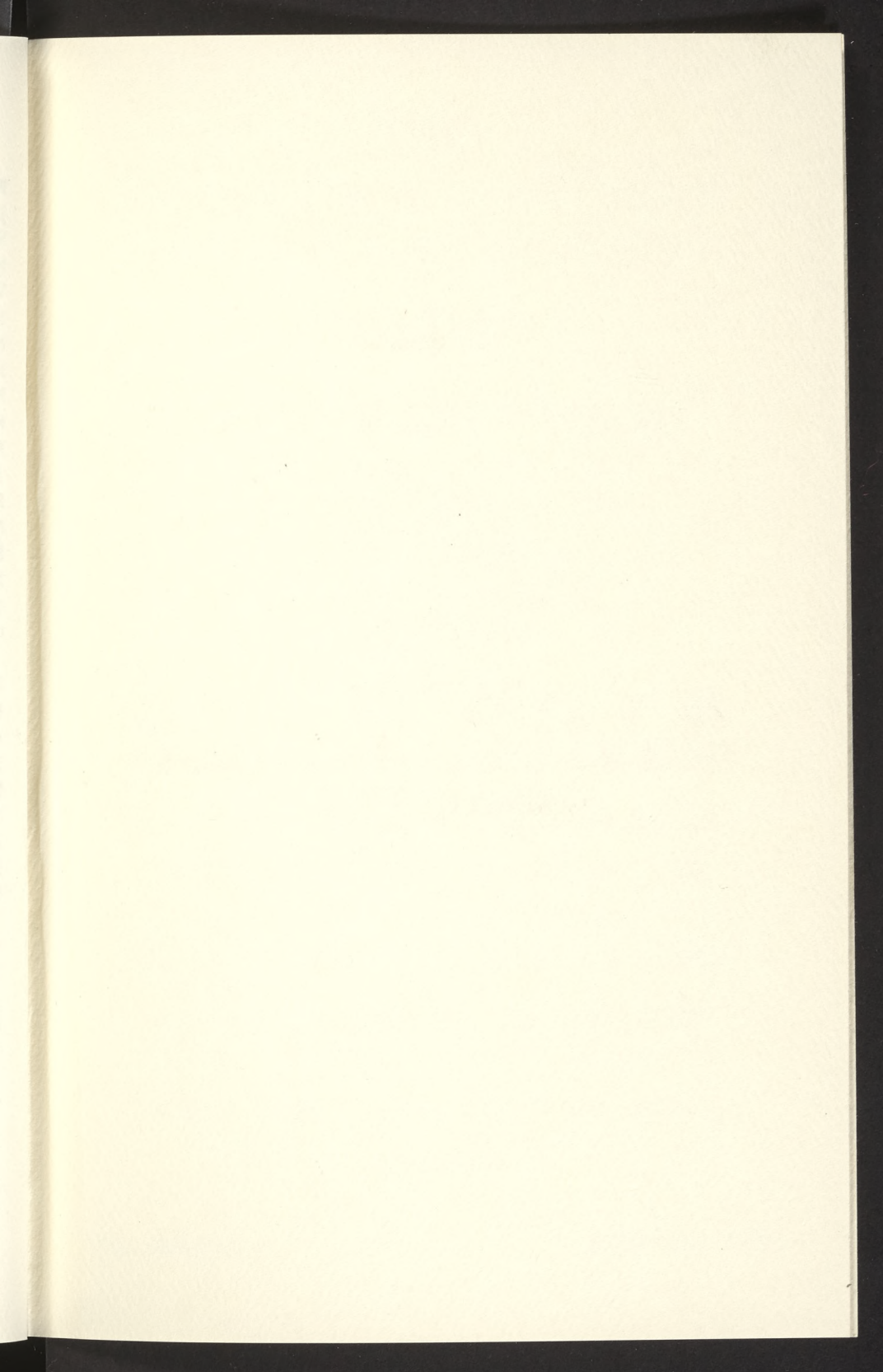
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THE VENTURA



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THE
VENTURA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY

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September 19, 1991, marks the Hundredth Anniversary of the Society of Ventura County Pioneers - forerunner of the Ventura County Historical Society: One Hundred Years of Dedication to the History of Ventura County.

Congratulations!

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SUMMER 1991

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ROCK SOAP

VENTURA JOURNAL.

SAN BUENAVENTURA, CALIFORNIA, SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 1876.

INTRODUCTION

IN THE MARCH AND JUNE ISSUES OF THE SOUTHERN California Historical Society *Quarterly* for 1950¹ there is an article by Los Angeles bookseller Muir Dawson entitled, "Southern California Newspapers, 1851-1876: A Short History and a Census." When I first encountered this study, I naturally turned to those listings for Ventura to find the following unexpected entry:

Ventura Rock Soap Journal

The Ventura Rock Soap *Journal* was an interesting venture that may not have gone beyond the initial volume 1, number 1, of March 18, 1876. It was a small four page five column paper, measuring 11 by 15 inches, which was "published at intervals" by the Ventura Rock Soap Company. Three thousand copies of this issue were printed for gratuitous distribution by the Ventura Signal Power Press Print² for the proprietors of the Ventura Rock Soap Company: A.F. Hubbard, W.S. Cronk, and L.H. Bickford.

The Rock Soap mine was located five miles from Ventura in a canyon leading to the beach. The rock was refined in Ventura and "Here is produced powder of every grade, from the commonest washing powder to the finest preparations for teeth and silver polish." Also "Rock Soap will take off axele [sic] grease."

The paper contained mostly advertisements and testimonials for Rock Soap and a few stories.

The sole location of this journal was given as the Pioneer Museum in Ventura. A search of the stacks in the Museum Library, heir to the Pioneer Museum collections, produced no sign of this rare, if not unique, piece of Ventura history. There was, however, a microfilm copy of the *Signal* in the Museum Library, and true to Mr. Dawson's description, the March 18 issue included (bound sideways) a copy of the *Ventura Rock Soap Journal*.

Several phone calls later the original bound issues of the *Ventura Signal* for March 1876 were located in the basement of the E.P. Foster library; they have since been moved, with the blessings of Head Librarian Richard Maynard, to the Museum Library.

Soon afterwards, while reading the many dramatic testimonials that pepper the columns of the *Journal*, the thought occurred to me that perhaps **some** remnant of this business might have survived to the present. Following a request for any evidence of the above company, Museum Registrar and Collections Manager Delee Marshall, in a marvelous display of restraint (of what must have been supreme curatorial pride), placed a heavy greenish-gray bar on my desk; it was plainly labeled "ROCK SOAP."³

A subsequent search of the early incorporation records of Ventura County, also held in the Museum Library, provided the names of the original trustees of the Ventura Rock Soap Mining and Manufacturing Company, and a sequence of events and a cast of historical characters began to emerge.



A BUBBLE BURST:
A History
of the
Ventura Rock Soap
Mining and Manufacturing Company

by
CHARLES N. JOHNSON

THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION for the Ventura Rock Soap Mining and Manufacturing Company were filed in Sacramento on April 14, 1876.⁴ The company was capitalized at \$100,000, with shares valued at \$100. The trustees (pending the election of regular directors) were: L.H. Bickford, W.S. Cronk, James Daly, H.G. Cronk, and A.H. Hubbard.⁵ Of these five, Leonard Hathaway Bickford quickly emerges as the motivating force behind this mining and manufacturing venture.

The Bickford family, Leonard, Mary Ann and their three children, arrived in San Buenaventura on the steamship *Kalorama*⁶ from San Francisco in July 1872. Their coming was no surprise as the local press eagerly anticipated the arrival of a wheelwright to Ventura.

WHEELWRIGHT-There has been much complaint of late, of the lack of a good wheelwright in San Buenaventura, one that had the necessary tools, skill and stock to do readily the many kinds of work required. We are pleased to learn that the vacancy is soon to be supplied by Mr. L.H. Bickford, of

North San Juan said to be a fine workman and having all things necessary. He will locate with Kenneth Grant on Main Street.⁷

Apparently having made some prior arrangements, the Bickfords briskly set about assimilating into community life. By October Mrs. Bickford was serving as the hostess for the Ladies Sewing Society,⁸ and shortly after received mention for her braiding and embroidery skills.⁹ Mr. Bickford, likewise, soon joined the Ventura Grant & Wilson Club (established for the promotion of U.S. Grant for president and Henry Wilson for vice president of the United States),¹⁰ a Republican association that would provide several valuable business connections. By April of the following year L.H. Bickford had commissioned the building



Mr. & Mrs. Bickford, Main Street, San Buenaventura

of a new home, and daughter Luella Bickford was publicly acknowledged for her rendition of "Moon so Round and Yellow" as a new pupil at the Ventura School.¹¹

The partnership of wheelwright Bickford and blacksmith Kenneth P. Grant, who had arrived in San Buenaventura six years earlier, formed the concern of Grant & Bickford. Although first producing wagons, with Bickford doing the wood work and Grant the iron work, the absence of an established undertaker and dedicated coffin maker (the latter need being fulfilled by furniture business owner Joe Richardson, among others), soon led the new partnership into the undertaking business. Superiority in the undertaking trade was temporarily assured when the house of Grant & Bickford brought the first hearse to Ventura.¹²

By 1873 the town of San Buenaventura numbered approximately 600 residents,¹³ with the firm of Grant & Bickford situated prominently in local business activity. Although the specific date is unknown, Bickford left the seemingly lucrative partnership to "retire," leaving the business to Grant who remained in the blacksmithing and undertaking business until 1890, when he went into the real estate business. Before his death, Grant left over thirty acres of land to the city, a portion of which became Grant Park.¹⁴

"RETIREMENT"

L. H. Bickford was next seen in connection with the discovery of "The somewhat celebrated mine of so-called mineral soap about six miles northward from San Buenaventura" ¹⁵ "The deposit

was first worked, to a small extent by H.L. [sic] Bickford."¹⁶ E.M. Sheridan recounts the beginnings of the mine:

On the retirement of Mr. Bickford he turned his attention to mining for a substance known as rock-soap, there being a big ledge of it in the Hubbard canyon on Rincon Beach, some eight miles west of this city. Bickford was taken with mining, in which business he had first been extensively engaged when first coming to California. The rock-soap so-called, was a kind of clay which had considerable efficacy as a cleanser.¹⁷

Hubbard canyon was owned by a gentlemen with the improbable name of Aristarchus Francis Hubbard, a native of New York, who arrived in Ventura in 1868, became a member of the Republican Freedom's Defenders,¹⁸ and later joined the Grant & Wilson Club. It was likely here that Bickford first met Hubbard and subsequently gained access to the canyon and the mine. This also explains Hubbard's involvement in the mining venture. In the 1873 Great Register for Ventura County, A. F. Hubbard listed his vocation as "farmer."¹⁹

Another trustee, James Daly, was also an early settler (1867) whose lumber business, with partner Owen Rodgers, went bankrupt from the disastrous results of the drought of 1876-7; crops failed causing the collapse of many farms and, ultimately, many of those to whom the farmers were indebted.²⁰ Daly was known for his enduring interest in mining, most recently in the mining activity in Inyo County.²¹ The Ventura Rock Soap Mine

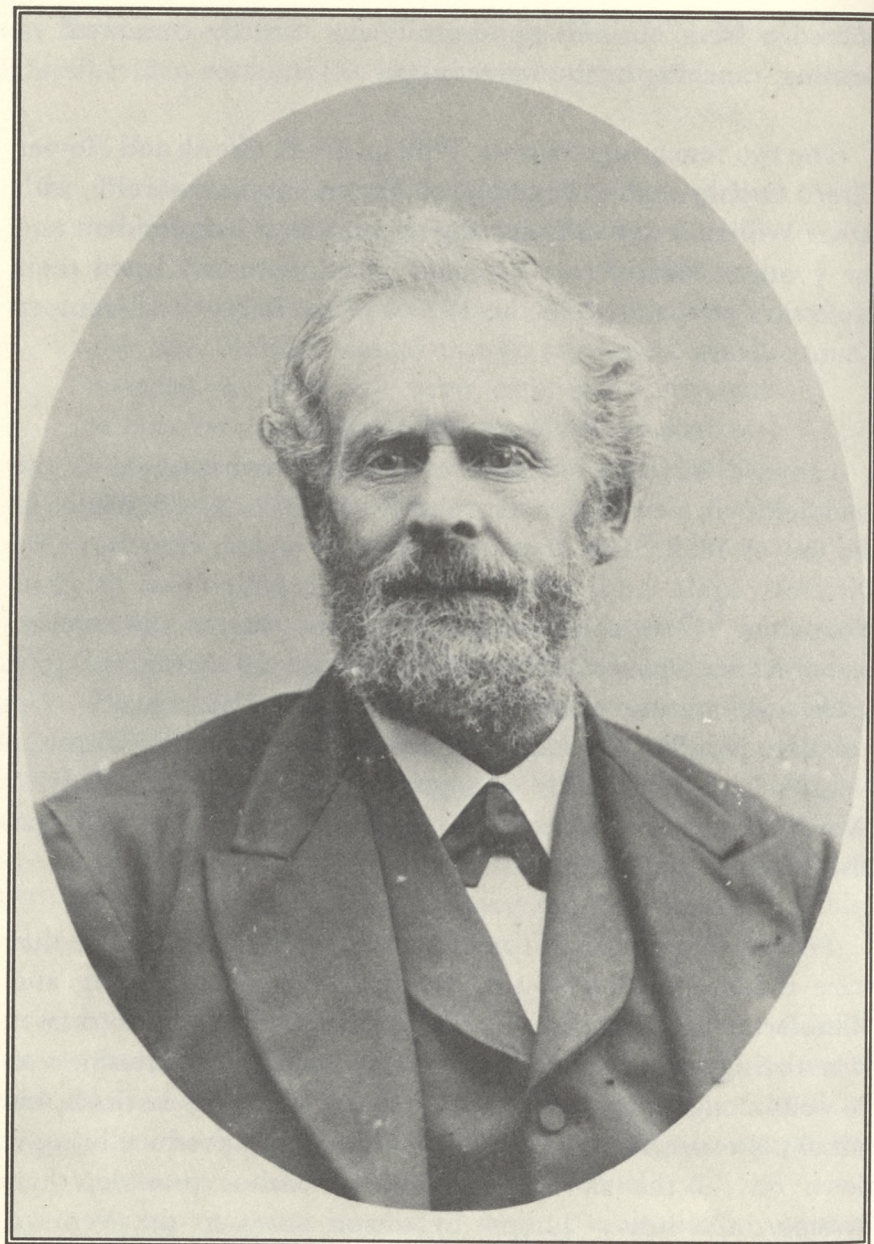
offered a fresh business opportunity not directly connected to farming, ranching or the water supply.

The two remaining trustees, William Smith Cronk and Homer Girard Cronk, seem to have played largely supportive roles, with father William eventually serving as company vice-president and the younger Homer as a director.²² Both investors listed their profession as "painter" in the 1873-8 Great Register of Ventura County voters.

PAST AS PROLOGUE

Leonard Bickford, a native of Maine,²³ had traveled to the gold fields via New York and probably arrived in San Francisco in the fall of 1852.²⁴ He does not appear in a San Francisco City Directory again until 1865, when his occupation was listed as "Carpenter."²⁵ It is reasonable to assume that in the interim years Bickford spent a portion of his time in and around the gold fields and mining operations of Northern California.²⁶ On February 25, 1869, Leonard Bickford married Mary Ann Tozer in Nevada City; both bride and groom were listed as living in "North San Juan" [Nevada], a mining town where gold was discovered in 1853.²⁷

From a comparison of contemporary newspaper accounts that trace the progression of the Ventura Rock Soap Mining and Manufacturing Company, it is apparent that Bickford was formulating and reformulating the particulars of the business as he went along. Drawing on past experience in the gold fields, his initial plan seems to have been to mine the raw product, bring it down out of the canyon by whatever means possible, then transport the heavy "lumps" by wagon down to the Ventura wharf where it would be shipped to San Francisco and processed



Leonard Hathaway Bickford

L. H. BICKFORD,

— CARPENTER —

— AND —

Repairer of All Kinds of Furniture.

— ALSO, —

MENDS GLASSWARE, CROCKERY, AND PARLOR ORNAMENTS,

Of every description.

Mattress Work done at private residence when required. Manufacturer of Waterproof Glue. All orders promptly attended to in any part of the city.

No. 607 POST STREET, SAN FRANCISCO.

(OVER.)

San Francisco, 1865

and/or sold in its raw state to be processed and packaged by others. In August 1875 it was reported:

Mr. Bickford, one of the owners of the soap mine, informs us that chemical tests have been made of the rock, and it is pronounced a superior quality of silicicalco, and is the first ever discovered in this country. It will manufacture into a superior glass and crockeryware. As a soap it is continually growing in favor, and the proprietors propose to erect a mill at once to pulverize it, when [sic] they will sack and box it for market.²⁸

By "country" Bickford must have meant "this part of the country" as the mining of "mineral soap" was far from new in California. In a chapter devoted to "Mining and Mining Stocks," Bancroft notes:

Mineral Soap-for which no better name has been suggested, possessing as it does, the cleansing qualities of manufactured soaps - was discovered as early as 1849, and re-discovered in 1855 at Table Mountain, two miles from Grass valley in Nevada county, the vein being fifteen feet thick. It is of grayish color, somewhat rough to the touch, as if composed of sand compacted with some oil, is easily mined, and a really good article of soap, so far as its cleansing qualities are concerned. It has been found in Sonoma, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.²⁹

An entry appearing in the same August issue of the *Signal* that suggested the construction of a mill, changed Bickford's plans:

The planing mill is now nearly ready for business. On Tuesday last it sent greetings from its whistle to the people. The building is large and commodious ... The proprietor, Mr. Hickerson, is an experienced machinist and a good business man.³⁰

Nimrod Hickerson had established the mill with partner Philip Wright³¹ on the southwest corner of Front and Chestnut Streets, near the Ventura wharf, presumably in anticipation of the many business opportunities offered by the growing town of San Buenaventura.³² A short two months later a notice informs readers that:

In an adjoining building [to the new planing mill] and propelled by the same engine is the crusher and the burrs through which passes before being packed for market the rock from the Ventura Soap Mine.³³

The responsibilities of the principal investors were described as such:

Mr. A. F. Hubbard is the discoverer of the valuable properties of the new mineral. He accidentally discovered while out hunting that it was good to remove grease and dirt from the hands...³⁴

Mr. L.H. Bickford, the man in immediate charge of the machinery and practical working department and also general salesman ...

Mr. Cronk, though a new man among us, recently from Ithaca, New York, has proved already that he knows how to adapt himself to a new country. He don't [sic] wait for things to turn up but quickly goes to turn things up.

Additionally, it was mentioned that the soap, brought out of the mine in "large lumps," was not only crushed into 1, 4, 10, and 25 pound packages at the mill, but also a portion was moistened and molded into small cakes.³⁵

In February of the following year we are informed:

The company have [sic] secured the large warehouse of R.G. Surdham adjacent to their crushing house, and will manufacture every grade of the article, both for the toilet and household.³⁶



October 1875, Wright & Hickerson's planing mill and the Rock Soap factory are located in the large frame building to the right of the wharf.

SAN FRANCISCO

From the very outset of the enterprise it seemed to be Bickford's intention to make Rock Soap available to as wide a market as possible:

Mr. L.H. Bickford, one of the energetic members of the Ventura Rock Soap company, has just returned from San Francisco ... Mr. Bickford informs us that their agent C.H. Wheeler is rapidly introducing the article ... An agency has been established in Santa Clara County.³⁷

Four thousand pounds of pressed rock soap were sent to the city on the *Senator*³⁸ on her last trip.³⁹

The Ventura Rock Soap Company is in a flourishing condition. The works in San Francisco, under the charge of Messrs. Bickford and Higgins are turning out large supplies ... Messrs. F.A. Sprague and E.B. Higgins [of Saticoy] have taken stock in the enterprise. Mr. Sprague will introduce the various brands in Sacramento and other counties in the north part of the state.⁴⁰

An undated promotional flyer (see front and back covers), distributed in San Francisco, lists C.P. Higgins (younger brother of E.B.) and L.H. Bickford as business managers (Bickford was also President), J.A. Daly as Treasurer and C.P. Higgins as Secretary. The business address was given as 410 Ritch Street, San Francisco.⁴¹

"A GOOD SHOWING"

An article appearing in an April 1877 newspaper described the first annual meeting of the stockholders of the Ventura Rock Soap Mining and Manufacturing Company; it was entitled "A Good

Showing: What the V.S.R.S. [sic] Company is Doing." The meeting was held at the company's offices at Front Street on April 9, 1877. The management was in the fortunate yet embarrassing position of having to rescind an agreement that allowed the soap to be manufactured and sold by an "outside party" in San Francisco. The wheels of production, or rather the means of production had developed locally beyond the original trustees' dreams. The company assumed production in June 1876.⁴² The bottom line was impressive: in the first three months over 4 tons of the rock were used, the shipment of the most recent three months amounted to over 14 tons, and the sales for the last ten months totaled an aggregate of nearly 50 tons. This kind of commercial success allowed the company not only to expand its operation but to make improvements as well, "They have constructed a good wagon road $2 \frac{2}{3}$ miles over a rough mountain region, at a great expense, so that now the rock is hauled direct from the mine to the wharf. They formerly packed it down to the stage on donkeys." With \$20,000 working capital from the year's success, the assembly looked forward to the coming year:

Notwithstanding the prospects of a dry season, the company is confident that the manufacture and sale of their soap will continue to increase even more rapidly than ever. Agencies have been established in England, Germany and France, and the seamen at San Francisco are accepting it as the finest salt water soap in use. The future of our county will be greatly brightened by the development of this one interest. The inexhaustible mountain of material, the hauling, the shipping, the quarrying, will afford business and encourage enterprise for all time. This with our oil wells, will most certainly aid in rapid

settlement and permanent development of the county and of Southern California.⁴³

As grandiose as these sentiments were, nothing was to compare to the exposure and notoriety given to this home-grown product the following year when examples of the soap were exhibited at the Paris Exposition of 1878.

EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE, PARIS 1878

With the present abundance of county, state and regularly occurring World Fairs, not to mention the communication explosion in the last several decades (making travel to parts distant an option, rather than a necessity), it would be easy to underestimate the importance of this landmark exposition. Located at the Champ de Mars (future site of the Eiffel Tower), and covering more than 66 acres (one building alone occupied 54 acres) the Paris Exposition of 1878 was visited by more than 13,000,000 people and was the largest such exhibit to be held anywhere in the world.⁴⁴

In this expansive setting was an exhibit that included a sample from the Ventura Rock Soap Mine. This specimen had been collected by the California State Museum and was included in an exhibit of minerals, ores, rocks and fossils of the Pacific Coast.⁴⁵ The rock soap was well received:

At the Paris Exposition of 1878 samples were shown which attracted considerable attention, and there were those who expressed an inclination to enter into their manufacture in France. At present "rock



soap" is largely used in the manufacture of certain soaps in California.⁴⁶

The exposure to potential European clients may explain how advertisements in San Francisco and Ventura were able to claim that Rock Soap was being represented by agents in England, France and Germany.

THE BUBBLE BURST

Given the apparent escalating success of Ventura Rock Soap at home and abroad it is hard to understand why Messrs. Bickford, Hubbard, Higgins, Daly and Cronk sold their interest in the soap mine to J.W. Foulkes (of Saticoy) and Edwin Merrifield of Boston

for \$50,000 in the fall of 1877, even before the mineral soap traveled to Paris.⁴⁷

At least part of the explanation must rest with the unbridled dreams and aspirations that were placed on the enterprise by the business community of Ventura. Touted one newspaper article:

The name "Ventura," when formerly pronounced in San Francisco, elicited the inquiry, "Where is Ventura?" Now it is better known. Ventura coal oil is sold in San Francisco and Ventura lubricating oil is being introduced into machine shops. Ventura Rock Soap is used in nearly every family ... Soon the name "Ventura" in every place will be a household word. She will send Light and Soap, the handmaids of civilization, to all parts of the world ... The name "Ventura," for her cheap oil and her cheap soap, Nature's own products, will be held as blessed by the poor man, and Saint Good Venture, San Buenaventura, will be re-canonized at many a hearthstone as a blessed saint.⁴⁸

As a locally produced product, the rock soap was often the object of protective local boosters who wouldn't hear of a discouraging word:

Rock Soap is a home institution and should be encouraged. Rock Soap, like all other, will do better with warm water; so our business men should not throw *cold* water on so valuable and important an industry.⁴⁹

When it became evident that there was significant interest from Santa Barbara investors who might possibly move the manufacturing operation to that town, a public outcry ensued.⁵⁰ Local investors were urged to visit the production facilities and to invest in such a worthy enterprise because, as one news article bluntly put it, there was "big money" to be made.

Added to this intense desire for a local enterprise to succeed on a grand scale, were the excessive promises that accompanied the product. One example should suffice:

It leaves the skin perfectly fresh and pure, and free from any soap smell. It cleanses silver, brass, tin or copper ware, like a charm and that too without scouring and leaves a beautiful polish. It readily removes from the hands axle-grease or oil of any kind. In short, it combines in one all of the good qualities of a first-class soap, metallic polish, grease extractor, and dentifrice, and at less than one-half the usual prices paid for these articles. This may sound extravagant, but this article is really a genuine one and will do all that is claimed for it.⁵¹

Not surprisingly, rock soap proved better at some tasks than others. It is hard to find any contemporary accounts that were openly derogatory, although one news note called the soap "this peculiar material." Several accounts removed from the influence of the immediate period have been more frank:

It turned out that this was not suitable as a washing or toilet soap; it was infusorial earth which can be used as an absorbent for liquid or as a polish for silver. This was a let down that burst the great soap bubble.⁵²

At present the infusorial earth is most in demand in the manufacture of dynamite ... the soap bubble has now been ruptured, however, and is heard of no more, and the vast field of enterprise which the discovery was supposed to promise has become, so to speak, a silent desert.⁵³

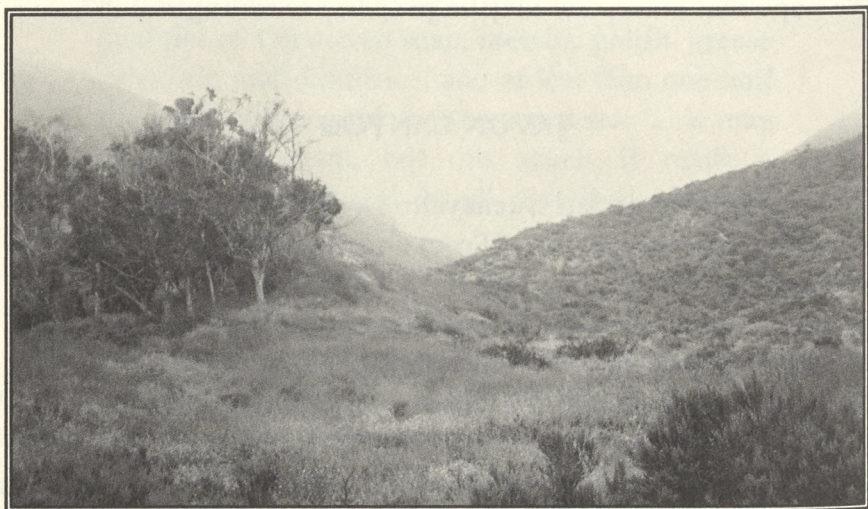
In November 1877, newspaper readers learned that "R.G. Surdam is preparing, at the warehouse formerly occupied by the Ventura Rock Soap Company, to pack pork the coming winter ... We hope that enterprise may be properly encouraged..."⁵⁴

JAVON CANYON

An 1886 map of San Buenaventura shows a planing mill still in existence at the corner of Front and Chestnut Streets. In 1906 the building is vacant, and by 1912 the building had been razed, leaving a vacant lot. On the opposite end of the block appears a skating rink that by 1928 will be replaced by the Ventura Bath House and Auditorium; a number of dwellings gathered tightly together have covered the former site of the Ventura Rock Soap Mining and Manufacturing Company.

Outside of a single bar of soap, a specimen (number 4024) somewhere in a metal drawer in Sacramento, a journal that was

issued once, and a flyer in a private collection, there is little to remind one of the once glorious potential of the Ventura Rock Soap Mining and Manufacturing Company.⁵⁵ That is, with one exception. Few remember Mr. Hubbard's property, just west of Pitas Point and east of Seacliff, or where he had his mine. This is for good reason since it hasn't been called Hubbard's for many many years. The canyon is now better known as Javon Canyon or *Jabón* Canyon, which is Spanish for "soap." Soap Canyon.



Javon Canyon

NOTES

Abbreviations

VCHS	Ventura County Historical Society
VCMHA	Ventura County Museum of History & Art

1. Vol. XXXII.2:171. This article was published separately in 1950 as *History and Bibliography of Southern California Newspapers 1851-1876* by Dawson's Book Shop.
2. That is to say, printed by the (power) press that normally produced the *Signal*.
3. This bar of Rock Soap was presented to the Museum by Horace W. Bickford, son of L.H. and Mary Ann Bickford, in 1944.
4. A copy of this document was filed with the Ventura County Clerk on April 8, 1876.
5. Document number 4 of the incorporation records for Ventura County, library, VCMHA. Documents were numbered as they were filed, making this company only the fourth business to incorporate after the establishment of Ventura County in 1873.
6. The *Kalorama* carried both passengers and cargo, and first landed in Ventura County at Port Hueneme on June 20, 1870. It was wrecked on February 26, 1876, while attempting to leave the Ventura Wharf.
7. *Ventura Signal*, June 8, 1872, p. 2, col. 2.
8. *Ibid.*, October 18, 1873, p. 3, col.1.
9. *Ibid.*, December 27, 1873, p. 3, col.1.

NOTES

10. A complete list of club membership can be found in E.M. Sheridan, "Historical Writings," vol. 7, p. 79. This list originally appeared in the *Ventura Star* for Nov. 25, 1929. Another entry by Sheridan, collected in vol. 7, p. 78, notes that the Republican Club in Ventura had grown out of a secret association of union sympathizers, and that Republican clubs were rare "because there were so few Republicans." The first Republican Club, named the Lincoln Council of the State Council of Freedom's Defenders, was formed on July 14, 1868.

11. *Ventura Signal*, July 5, 1873, p. 3, col. 2.

12. Later a more expensive and elaborate hearse was brought from San Francisco by the Richardsons and the business tide was again changed in favor of the competition. An excellent account of this episode can be found in an article by E.M. Sheridan entitled, "L.H. Bickford Brought First Hearse to Ventura Years Ago," which appeared in the *Ventura Star* for August 11, 1927, and is collected in Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 1, p. 156, in the Museum Library.

13. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 6, p. 111. Original source is unidentified.

14. Charles M. Gidney, Benjamin M. Brooks, Edwin M. Sheridan, *History of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties, Ca.* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1917), vol. II, p. 501-2.

15. *History of Santa Barbara County, California; with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent men and Pioneers* (Oakland: Thompson & West, 1883), p. 423, "Mineral Soap."

16. *Ibid.*

17. Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 1, p.156. This article originally appeared in the *Ventura Star*, August 11, 1927.

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18. Herbert F. Ricard, "Charter Members of the Lincoln Council of Freedom's Defenders," VCHS *Quarterly* for Spring 1977 (vol. XXII, no. 30), p. 22.

19. *Great Register of the County of Santa Barbara, Cal. from July 9th 1866 to August 1st 1873* (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara County Clerk, 1873).

20. Not since the drought of 1863-64 had Ventura County received so little rain; farmers were hard hit along with those who had turned from cattle raising (in the earlier drought) to sheep raising, only to be forced into the wholesale killing (*matanzas*) of their flocks for their pelts. See "Ventura County Had Its Most Disastrous Years in 1876-7," Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 7, p. 150. This article originally appeared in the *Ventura County Star*, January 17, 1927.

21. See Sheridan, "Writings," vol. 7, p. 166. This article is incomplete and is taken from the *Ventura Post* for November 22, 1924.

22. *Ventura Signal*, April 14, 1877, p. 2, col. 4.

23. *Great Register*, County of Ventura, 1873.

24. One "H.L." Bickford (a transposition of initials that occurs often enough in listings for "L.H." to make this entry a distinct possibility) is listed as disembarking from the *North America* on Sept. 1, 1852. From Louis Rasmussen, *San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists* (Colma: San Francisco Historic Records, 1965). Vol. IV, June 17, 1852 to June 6, 1853, p. 101, 296.

25. Henry G. Langley, *The San Francisco Directory for the Year 1865: Embracing a General Directory of Residents and Business Directory; Also, A Directory of Street, Public Offices, Etc. and a Map of the City...* (San Francisco: H.G. Langley, 1865-6), p. 80.

NOTES

26. One intriguing lead that could not be pursued before publication time is the existence of a "Bickford Mine" in Plumas County. Mention of this mine can be found in the Information Index published in microform by the California State Library in 1965.

27. A photocopy of this wedding certificate can be found in the VCMHA Museum Biographical files under "Bickford Family."

28. *Ventura Signal*, August 7, 1875, p. 5, col. 1. The test mentioned is probably one (there were evidently several - none conclusive) conducted by George H. Koenig and published in a periodical entitled *The Naturalist's Leisure Hours* (Philadelphia: A.E. Foote). This study is mentioned in Henry G. Hanks, "Catalogue and Description of the Minerals of California....," in the *Fourth Annual Report of the State Mineralogist* (Sacramento: California State Mining Bureau, 1884), p. 345.

29. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *Works* (Santa Barbara: Wallace Hebbard, 1970). Vol. vii, "History of California 1860-1890," p. 662-3.

30. *Ventura Signal*, August 7, 1875, p. 5, col. 1.

31. Wright's part in this enterprise was described in the *Ventura Signal* for October 23, 1875, "Mr. Wright, late of Oshkosh [Wisconsin], is a man of means, unable to work, but has an experienced eye."

32. Nimrod Helton Hickerson, a native of Putnam, Ohio, died of congestive heart failure on April 25, 1878, at the age of 56. A resident of the Sespe, Hickerson figured prominently, as did another Rock Soap Mine investor, Frederick Augustus Sprague, in the murder trial of T. Wallace More; Hickerson serving both as a member of the Grand Jury and a witness at the trial. His death bed deposition, taken by Judge Nehemiah Blackstock, was a key factor in Sprague's eventual conviction. One other investor, Charles Higgins, was mentioned as being associated with that crime. See Colonel W. J. Sanborn, "Memoirs of a Santa Paula

NOTES

- Shepherd, 1873-1875," in the November issue of the *VCHS Quarterly* (vol. 5, no. 1), p. 5 and note number 4.
33. *Ventura Signal*, October 23, 1875, p. 2, col. 2.
 34. The story, alternately, goes that Hubbard discovered the substance while prospecting for gold. See *Ventura Rock Soap Journal*, March 18, 1876, p. 1, col. 1.
 35. *Ventura Signal*, October 23, 1875, p. 2, col. 2.
 36. *Ibid.*, February 26, 1876, p. 2, col. 4.
 37. *Ibid.*
 38. The *Senator*, the only side-paddle steamship carrying cargo and passengers between San Francisco and San Diego at the time, was first brought into service on the Pacific Coast in 1874 by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company; it had previously been used on the Sacramento River. In 1884 the *Senator* was stripped and sold to an Australian firm.
 39. *Ibid.*, April 22, 1876, p. 3, col. 2.
 40. *Ibid.*, November 18, 1876, p. 2, col 1.
 41. Flyer in the collection of Clifton Smith of Santa Barbara.
 42. This agreement was with C.H. Wheeler; it promised production and distribution rights for five years. Mention of the particulars of this agreement can be found in an article entitled "KAOLIN" in the *Ventura Star Free Press* for November 27, 1875, p. 2, col. 4.
 43. All quotes and paraphrased material in this section taken from the *Ventura Signal*, April 14, 1877, p. 2, col. 4.

NOTES

44. See "Exhibition," *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Eleventh edition (Cambridge: University Press, 1910), p. 67-69 for an excellent history of expositions, and description of the 1878 Paris Exposition in particular.
45. A copy of the catalogue from this exhibit can be found at the Bancroft Library. It was published by the California Commission for the Paris Exposition of 1878, and printed in San Francisco by E. Bosqui & Company in 1878.
46. Henry G. Hanks, "Catalogue and Description of the Minerals of California...," p. 345.
47. *Ventura Signal*, September 15, 1877, p. 3, col. 1.
48. *Ibid.*, August 4, 1877, p. 2, col. 4.
49. *Ibid.*, July 14, 1877, p.3, col. 1.
50. *Ibid.*, July 1, 1876, p. 3, col 2.
51. *Ibid.*, May 20, 1876, p. 5 (supplement), col. 5.
52. Herbert F. Ricard, "Place Names of Ventura County," *VCHS Quarterly* for Winter 1972 (vol. XVII, no. 2), "Javon Canyon."
53. Thompson & West, p. 423.
54. *Ventura Signal*, November 3, 1877, p. 3, col. 2.
55. According to a representative of the Santa Fe Energy Company (a facility situated adjacent to the Javon Canyon area) who has worked in the region for over twenty years, the probable site of the mine has long been obscured by overgrowth and could only be reached "with a bulldozer."

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QUARTERLY**

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ANALYSIS.

Silicia	72.6
Magnesia	8.8
Alumina	2.9
Lime	2.3
Water, uncombined	7.7
Water, combined, Organic Matter,	
Carbonic Acid: and Oxide of Iron,	5.7
Total	100

H. G. HANKS, Chemist.

It is ascertained by the above analysis that Rock Soap has deterative properties valuable to an eminent degree for the purpose for which it is recommended, and to contain nothing injurious for such use. After using it none will be without it. It is perfectly marvelous in its operations.

Rock Soap is prepared and put up

1st. In the form of powder for household uses. An essential article in every kitchen; cleans all cooking utensils, floors, paint, etc. It is free from all alkalies, thus avoiding the injurious effects of common soap upon fine linen or paint. It polishes tinware, etc.

2d. In cakes, pumice for the hands, and fine toilet for toilet and bath. Has a very pleasant effect on the skin, removes tan, ink, fruit stains, tar, pitch, etc.

3d. In powder (refined) as a polish for silver and gold. Not only a polish but a powerful absorbant of grease and tarnish, it surpasses any other polish.

4th. In Tooth Powder, healing in its

nature, cleansing in the highest sense, pure as the earth from which it comes, it surpasses any known dentrifice.

What Rock Soap will do.

It will work in any kind of water, hot, cold, hard, soft or salt.

It will clean paint without injuring the varnish.

It will clean hard finished walls.

It will clean marble.

It will clean glass and leave a beautiful polish.

It will wash dishes, taking off tea stains and fly marks.

It will clean tin, brass, copper and zinc.

It will clean gold, silver and pewter.

It will scour wood and clean floors.

It will clean furniture.

It will clean oil lamps.

It will clean sinks and drains.

It will remove smells.

It will clean the human skin.

It will take off tan.

It will take off fruit stains.

It will clean the hands after paring apples or potatoes.

It will clean the hands after paring onions.

It will clean the hands after filling oil lamps.

It will clean the teeth.

Takes mildew out of clothing.

Will keep washbowls clean where hard water is used.

Will take out redwood stains.

Will clean harness.

Makes the best razor hone paste.

It will clean anything that is dirty.

Rock Soap will do everything in the catalogue of cleaning.

It does the work better than soap, does it with less labor, and at
LESS COST.

TRY ROCK SOAP.

—THE—

Ventura Rock Soap Mining & Manufacturing Co.

410 Ritch Street, S. F.

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J. A. DALY, Treasurer.

C. P. HIGGINS, Secretary.

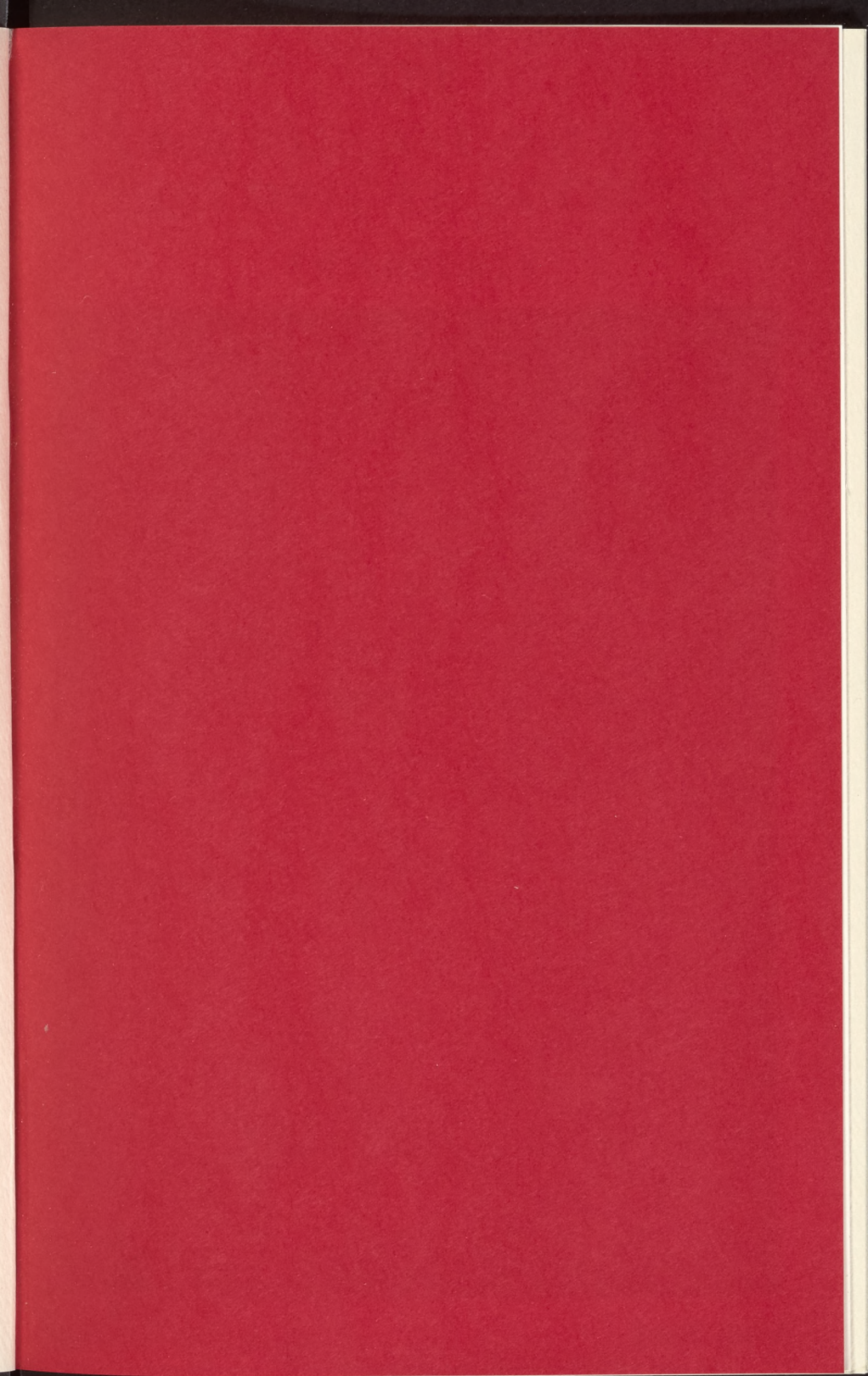
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We want the address of every person who has tried Rock Soap and does not like it.

A. L. Bancroft & Co., Printers and Lithographers, 721 Market St., S. F.

Buy Rock Soap if you want a good article.





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"...one day Saint Thomas coming to Saint Bonaventure, desired him to shew him the books he made most use of: and Saint Bonaventure showed him those few he had in his Cell. But Saint Thomas not content with this, besought him once more to shew him those other choice and rare books, whence he gathered the high conceptions, and most admirable and pithy sentences, with which his discourses and his writings were so full. Then the most holy and deuout man, pointing to the Crucifix which he had in his chamber, said vnto him: assure yourself most dear father that this is the book whence I haue whatsoeuer I deliver in school or in writing: and that my soul receiues more light at the feet of this Crucifix, and in hearing and seruing holy Mass, then in all the studies or exercises of learning. At which Saint Thomas was much edified, and encreased his esteem and affection of Saint Bonaventure, although this did not seem new or strange vnto him, who had found by his own experience, that for to attain the true wisdom and great knowledge, prayer was more available then reading."

Peter Ribadeneyra, *The Lives of the Saints* (S. Omer: Joachim Carlier, 1669) p. 471.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

NORMAN NEUERBURG is a native Californian. His interest in the California missions began over half a century ago as the result of a course taken in junior high school. While still in high school he became involved in the restoration of San Fernando mission. He received his B.A. in Ancient Greek at the University of California, Los Angeles, and his Ph.D. in the history of art at New York University with a specialty in ancient Roman architecture. During these years he often worked at San Fernando mission during the summers.

He has taught courses in many periods of the history of art at the University of California, Berkeley, Riverside, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles campuses, as well as Indiana University, the University of Southern California, and California State University, Dominguez Hills of which he is now Professor Emeritus after retiring in 1982. While teaching at CSUDH, Dr. Neuerburg originated a course on the Art of California and the Southwest.

Since retirement he has been active in the restoration of several of the California Missions and the Santa Barbara Presidio, as well as other projects, both as consultant and as a "hands-on" worker. He has published extensively in the field, and he is the author of "New Light on the Church of Mission San Buenaventura" which appeared in the Summer 1983 issue of the *Quarterly*.

Cover: Saint Bonaventure, painting in the collection of the Ventura County Museum of History & Art, Anonymous donation. (Photograph by Wm. B. Dewey, Courtesy Bellerophon Books)

SAINT BONAVENTURE, SERAPHIC DOCTOR

by
NORMAN NEUERBURG

JUST WHO WAS SAINT BONAVENTURE, patron of the ninth California mission, the City of San Buenaventura, and, by extension, of Ventura County as well? Why was he so popular among the Franciscans that his image was found in nearly half the mission churches in California? Among the Franciscan saints only Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Anthony of Padua were found more frequently in the missions of California, yet today he is largely forgotten.

THE LIFE OF THE SAINT

Bonaventure was born as Giovanni di Fidenza in 1221 in the village of Bagnoregio (formerly Bagnorea) in the province of Viterbo, north of Rome.¹ He carried his father's name and his mother was Maria Ritella. Apparently he was a sickly child and, according to a pious legend, his mother took him to Saint Francis of Assisi (d.1226) for a cure which caused her to exclaim "O, buona ventura" (good luck), and that became his name. She then vowed that she would try to convince her son to join the Franciscan order. Eventually he did, either in 1238 or 1243. He attended the University of Paris where he completed his studies under Alexander of Hales (d. 1245). He received his first degree, which permitted him to teach, in 1248. He continued teaching at the University until 1255 when the secular professors attempted to prohibit the mendicant friars (Franciscans and Dominicans) from teaching, but that effort failed, and in 1257 Bonaventure, along with Thomas Aquinas, received the title of Doctor. The two had been close friends at the University.

That same year Bonaventure was named Minister General of the Franciscans. It was a difficult time as the Order was distracted by dissension from two extreme groups, the *Spirituales* who wished to follow the original Rule literally and the *Relaxti* who wished to introduce innovations and mitigations. In time, Bonaventure was able to come to a compromise between the two extremes, and he reorganized the Order on more rational lines. In 1263 he established the observance known as the Angelus, though, counter to tradition, it was not he who established the feast of the Immaculate Conception for the Order. In fact, along with Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure seems not to have accepted the doctrine as then proposed, although eventually (especially in Spain), he did become associated with the Immaculate Conception. The real proponent of the doctrine, however, was John Duns Scotus (d. 1308) an important Franciscan theologian whose philosophy was taught by Junípero Serra at the Lullian University in Palma de Mallorca. Duns Scotus was not beatified until 1991!

In 1265 Bonaventure rejected the honor of being named Archbishop of York as he felt himself unworthy. In 1266 he wrote an official version of the Life of Saint Francis, and all previous versions were ordered to be destroyed. In 1271 he was responsible for reconciling the cardinals who had delayed three years in electing a successor to Pope Clement IV. The story that Bonaventure himself was considered for the papal crown seems to have no basis in fact. Likewise, the tale that the Capitano del Popolo of Viterbo, Raniero Gatti, on the advice of the future saint, suggested the roof be taken off the Palazzo Papale (where the conclave was being held) to force a decision by the cardinals is also perhaps doubtful, but visitors to the building today are shown holes in the floor where tents were supposedly put up to keep off the rain.² In 1273, again much against his will, he was named

Cardinal Bishop of Albano by Gregory X. It is said that when the pope's emissaries brought his cardinal's hat to him he was at work washing dishes, and he instructed them to hang it on a nearby tree until his hands were free. He had been appointed so that he might participate in the Fourteenth Ecumenical Council which opened at Lyons on May 7, 1274. He was entrusted with deliberations with the Greek Church in an attempt to heal the schism between east and west. Union was effected on July 6, 1274, but it did not last. Bonaventure died less than two weeks later on July 15th; it has been asserted that he was poisoned. He was buried in the friars' church in Lyons. His old school companion, Thomas Aquinas, had died a few months before on March 7th.

Bonaventure led a humble and stainless life, and Dante placed him among the saints in *Paradise* (Canto XII, 127-129). He was a prolific writer in the realms of philosophy and theology, and produced some works which can be defined as mystical.

CANONIZATION OF SAINT BONAVENTURE

Because of the continuing dissensions within the various factions of the Franciscans, he did not receive the rapid canonization enjoyed by others of the first century of the Order, such as Francis and Clare of Assisi (both in two years), Anthony of Padua (one year), and Louis, Bishop of Toulouse (twenty years), but he did eventually come to be regarded as *Beatus* (Blessed), especially among the members of the Observant branch of the Order. At that time, beatification was often by acclamation or by the local bishop, and devotion was limited to a specific area (beatification by papal decree was not standard before the time of Urban VIII [1623-1644]). The moving of his relics into a new Franciscan church in Lyons, by order of the French King Louis XI in 1434, probably opened the way for his canonization on April

14, 1482, by Sixtus IV, himself a Franciscan. Bonaventure was raised to the rank of Doctor of the Church a century later in 1587 by Sixtus V, another Franciscan pope. In a like fashion Thomas Aquinas had been canonized in 1323 by Pope John XXII who had been educated by the Dominicans and raised to the rank of Doctor of the Church in 1567 by Pope Pius V, a member of the Dominican order.

Unfortunately, Bonaventure's remains were burned when Huguenots plundered his shrine in 1562, though his perfectly preserved head survived until it disappeared during the French Revolution. An arm, however, had been given to the cathedral of Bagnoregio in 1491 by Charles VIII, and it is still there.

SAINT BONAVENTURE IN THE HISTORY OF ART

Because of the long delay in his canonization Bonaventure was slow to appear in pictorial or sculptural form.³ He does appear in several fourteenth century representations of the *Lignum vitae* (Tree of Life), the subject of one of his most popular writings, but only as a small subsidiary figure. The first real representation of him that has come down to us in good shape is in the frescoes completed in 1452 by Benozzo Gozzoli in the church of San Francesco in Montefalco (fig. 1). The half-length figure is dressed in the brown Franciscan habit and wears a cardinal's hat while he reads; the inscription says "Beat. Bonaventura." In the years before and after his canonization he begins to appear in Italian altarpieces, either as a separate figure in a series of panels or as part of a group of saints adoring the Virgin. Throughout the sixteenth century he appears in numerous paintings for Franciscan churches, though sculptured representations are rare at the time. An exception is the glazed *terracotta* relief (fig. 2) by Andrea della Robbia on the Loggia di San Paolo in the Piazza Santa Maria



Figure 1. Beatus Bonaventure, fresco by Benozzo Gozzoli, Church of San Francesco, Montefalco.

Novella in Florence (1489-96). He is always shown as a Franciscan, frequently as a bishop with a cape and a mitre or with a laced-edged surplice and a cardinal's cape. Sometimes he wears the hat of a cardinal, but often he only carries it in his hand or it is shown



Figure 2. Saint Bonaventure, Andrea della Robbia, glazed terracotta relief, Loggia di San Paolo, Piazza Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

hanging on a tree or even lying on the floor. In a few examples it even floats above his head. No known portraits of Bonaventure have survived, so representations of him vary considerably. He may be young or old, clean-shaven or bearded (bearded representations were often made for Capuchins, an offshoot of the Franciscan Order). At times the paintings seem to be real portraits dressed as the saint, as in a 1561 painting by Bronzino (fig. 3). He may carry a book in his hand - often open and with a quill pen in



Figure 3. Saint Bonaventure, Agnolo Bronzino, Accademia Carrara, Bergamo.

one hand - or a crucifix or a model of a church. This last is rare in Italy but not unknown. His promotion to Doctor of the Church was recorded in a great fresco in the Vatican Library during the reign of Sixtus V.⁴

Saint Bonaventure achieved great popularity in Spain in the seventeenth century, and the one little church dedicated to him in Rome was built for Spanish Franciscans. Various Spanish paintings associate him with the Immaculate Conception.⁵ The most important cycle celebrating the saint was executed for the church of the Colegio de San Buenaventura in Seville by Francisco de Herrera the Elder in 1628 and Francisco Zurbarán in 1629.⁶ Eight canvases of the life of Saint Bonaventure, four by each artist, were placed above arches in the nave and transept of the church, while symbolic frescoes on the barrel vault of the nave and Franciscan saints in the crossing dome were all painted by Herrera. The canvases were stolen by Marshall Soult⁷ in 1810 and have been dispersed. Those by Herrera refer to the saint's childhood and youth as follows:

1. Apparition of Saint Catherine of Alexandria to the Family of Saint Bonaventure (now at Bob Jones University, Greenville, N.C.);
2. Saint Bonaventure as a child, cured by Saint Francis⁸ (Paris, Musée du Louvre);
3. Saint Bonaventure accepted into the Franciscan Order⁹ (Madrid, Museo del Prado);
4. Saint Bonaventure receives communion from the hands of an angel (Paris, Musée du Louvre).

Those by Zurbarán refer to the maturity and death of the saint as follows:

5. Visit of Saint Thomas Aquinas to Saint Bonaventure¹⁰ (fig. 4, destroyed 1945, formerly Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich Museum);
6. Saint Bonaventure and the Angel¹¹ (Dresden, Gemaelde Galerie);
7. Saint Bonaventure at the Council of Lyons¹² (Paris, Musée de Louvre);
8. Exposition of the body of Saint Bonaventure¹³ (Paris, Musée de Louvre).

Around 1665 Bartolomé Esteban Murillo executed a painting (now in the Museo de Bellas Artes in Seville) of Saint Bonaventure with Saint Leander for the Capuchin church in Seville¹⁴; he is shown with a beard and a cardinal's cape, and he carries the model of a Gothic church on top of a book. Sculptures of the saint are rather more frequent in Spain, due to the Spanish preference for three-dimensional images rather than painted ones in this period; there seems to be little variation in the statues. A popular Majorcan woodcut (fig. 5, inside back cover) shows him standing, wearing a surplice and a cardinal's cape. In his left hand he carries a model of a church while a cardinal's hat is hung over his wrist. In his right hand is a quill pen. Below this is a table holding an ink well and sander, a second quill pen, and a mitre referring to his rank as bishop of Albano on top of a book while a crozier leans against the table. In the sky above this is an angel holding an oval with a representation of Christ on the Cross, surrounded by the inscription *Bibliotheca D. Bonaventurae*, and a ray shines from this to the head of the saint. This refers to the subject of the first of Zurbarán's paintings where Saint Bonaventure points out the source of his knowledge in his library, the Crucified Savior, to Saint Thomas Aquinas (fig. 4). On the floor in the lower right hand corner are the papal crown and a bishop's mitre showing the



Figure 4. Saint Bonaventure visited by Saint Thomas Aquinas, Francisco Zurbarán, destroyed, Formerly Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin.

honors he had rejected. Thus the print hits all the bases. This print accompanies a Goig, a long poem in Majorcan dialect in honor of the saint (see inside back cover). Such sheets were well known to Serra and are made to this day on the island of Majorca.

In Mexico he is sometimes paired with Saint Anthony of Padua as on the façade of San Francisco in Guadalajara, and on the side door of San Francisco in Puebla (figs. 6, 7). He also may be paired with his friend Thomas Aquinas just as Saint Francis is often



Figure 6. Saint Bonaventure, stone statue on the façade of San Francisco, Guadalajara.



Figure 7. Saint Bonaventure, relief panel on the side door of San Francisco, Puebla.

paired with Saint Dominic, referring to the friendship between the two founders.¹⁵

SAINT BONAVENTURE IN THE CALIFORNIA MISSIONS

The mission of San Buenaventura was originally intended to be the third mission founded according to the wishes of the Inspector-General Don Joseph de Gálvez. He, in fact, referred to it as *his* mission.¹⁶ Ironically, it was to be the last founded by Junípero Serra. Either by chance or by intention the third mission, San Antonio de Padua, was founded on the feast day of Saint Bonaventure, July 18, 1771. San Buenaventura's mission was finally founded on March 31, 1782, three centuries after his canonization, and less than a week from the actual anniversary

(because of the eleven days gained by the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar).

At the time of the founding the mission received a canvas of the patron saint as a "gift from the King," as the usual fiction went.¹⁷ It was about a *vara* and a half (about 4'2") high. It presumably is the painting signed *Joseph de Páez fecit, en México*, now in the museum of the mission. Bonaventure wears a cardinal's mantle and carries a model of a church in one hand and a quill-pen in the other; next to him is a table with a crucifix (fig. 8). It presumably is one of the three rolled-up canvases that Serra found in Monterey aboard the supply ship *San Antonio* in 1770.¹⁸ Another painting (cover), recently donated to the Ventura County Museum of History & Art, is said to have come from an old family in the city and could have once been at the mission, though no record of it has turned up as yet. The two-thirds length figure, within a painted oval, is dressed as in the Páez painting with similar attributes. It is inscribed *S. Buena Bentura* and is probably an eighteenth century Mexican work, though no attribution to an artist is now possible.

The mission once had two statues of the patron. The first, two *varas* (5'6") high, was invoiced in Mexico City on February 21, 1791,¹⁹ and is presumably the statue now on the main altar (fig. 9). It differs from the paintings in that he carries a book without the model of a church and wears the biretta of a Doctor of Philosophy on his head. A second figure 5/6 of a *vara* (27½") high was sent in 1809 and cost 82 pesos.²⁰ It has now been lost, but a biretta in the Ventura County Museum of History & Art may belong to it.



Figure 8. Saint Bonaventure, painting by José de Paez, Mission Museum, Ventura. (Photograph courtesy Martin J. Morgado)



Figure 9. Saint Bonaventure, statue on the main altar of Mission San Buenaventura. (Photograph by Kurt Baer, courtesy SBMAL)

In 1807 the mission requested four hundred prints, about 8" high, including thirty of the patron, probably to distribute among the Indians; just as holy cards used to be distributed by the nuns in parochial schools to the good students.²¹

Mission San Carlos acquired a small painting, about a *vara* (33") high with frame for four pesos in 1773.²² The painting of the saint now hanging in the church there does not fit the description. In 1810 a statue a *vara* and a quarter high was sent at the cost of fifty pesos;²³ in 1835 at the time of secularization it was valued at only ten pesos.²⁴ It stood on the side altar of Our Lady of the Pueblito and was accompanied by Saint Clare of Assisi. The statue of Saint Bonaventure is now on the main altar (fig. 10). He carries an open book in one hand and wears a biretta.

Mission San Antonio received its statues the same time as Mission San Buenaventura.²⁵ The statue of Saint Bonaventure was described as being a *vara* and a half (4'2") high, and he carries a book but no head gear; it is the one now on the main altar (fig. 11), balanced by a figure of Saint Francis. The 1842 inventory lists a painting of the saint in the ante-sacristy,²⁶ and that may be the one now in the church at Mission San Miguel (fig. 12, see back cover). He again is shown carrying a book supporting the model of a church and has a quill pen in the other hand. On the table is a red biretta, and through a window one sees the Façade and dome of a church, perhaps Saint Peter's in Rome in reference to his supposedly having turned down the papacy.

In 1794 Mission San Gabriel received a statue one *vara* and 3/4 (4'9") high at a cost of 56 pesos and 4 reales.²⁷ He carries an open book and a quill pen (fig. 13). The statue has been in the sacristy in recent years, but originally may have been situated



Figure 10. Saint Bonaventure, statue now on main altar of Mission San Carlos. (Photography by Wm. B. Dewey, courtesy Bellerophon Books)

on a side altar, possibly with two of the three statues of Dominican saints that arrived in the same shipment. These would be Saint Thomas Aquinas (now at Mission San Juan Capistrano since early in this century) and Saint Vincent Ferrer (now in the Plaza



Figure 11. Saint Bonaventure, statue on the main altar of Mission San Antonio.



Figure 13. Saint Bonaventure, statue at Mission San Gabriel.

Church in Los Angeles). The third, Saint Dominic, would have been placed on the main altar with Saint Francis.

Mission San José asked for and received a life-size statue of Saint Bonaventure in 1808 (fig. 14), and it was placed on a side altar.²⁸ It is now in the newly rebuilt mission church on a side altar just outside the communion rail. He has lost the attributes which were once in his hands.

At Mission La Purísima Concepción the main altar of the church had a carved figure of the saint a *vara* and a half (4'2") high which cost 75 pesos in 1811.²⁹ It was balanced by a figure of Saint Anthony, and both flanked an image of the Immaculate Conception. This figure probably was damaged or destroyed in the 1812 earthquake, and a second statue was acquired for the church at the second site, in 1825, for the main altar.³⁰ Neither figure is extant.

In 1817 Mission San Luis Rey requested figures of Saint Bonaventure and Saint Thomas Aquinas a *vara* (33') high.³¹ These two saints are mentioned in the 1844 inventory as being 2¼ *varas* (6') high so they may have gotten better than they asked for.³² As late as the 1890s these still stood in place on the upper level of the main altar, but in bad condition, and they appear to have been discarded when the altar was put back into use when Franciscans returned from Mexico.

A painting of Saint Bonaventure, now at Mission Santa Barbara, is listed in the 1858 inventory, but doesn't appear in any earlier records.³³ However, two paintings of Saint Francis and Saint Anthony of the same size, and surely by the same hand, appear in the 1834 inventory so this may have been left out through an



Figure 14. Saint Bonaventure, statue now on a side altar at Mission San José.

oversight (that inventory is a particularly disorganized document). At any rate, the saint is shown with a cardinal's cape over his habit and has an open book and a quill pen in his hand (fig. 15).

A figure of Saint Bonaventure is now on one of the side altars in the church of Mission Dolores (fig. 16). That reredos and its mate arrived in 1810,³⁴ but we have no information as to when any of the statues arrived, though there is no reason to doubt that it is contemporaneous with the original furnishings of the church.

It is possible that other missions could have had either painting or statues that have been lost, or do not appear in known records. At any rate, the relative popularity of a saint who is largely unknown today is somewhat remarkable. Yet, even then his popularity was limited to the Franciscans themselves. He represented the intellectual side of the Order. His only real competitor was John Duns Scotus who achieved the status of Beatus (Blessed) only this past year and never achieved a place on the altar. Nevertheless, Saint

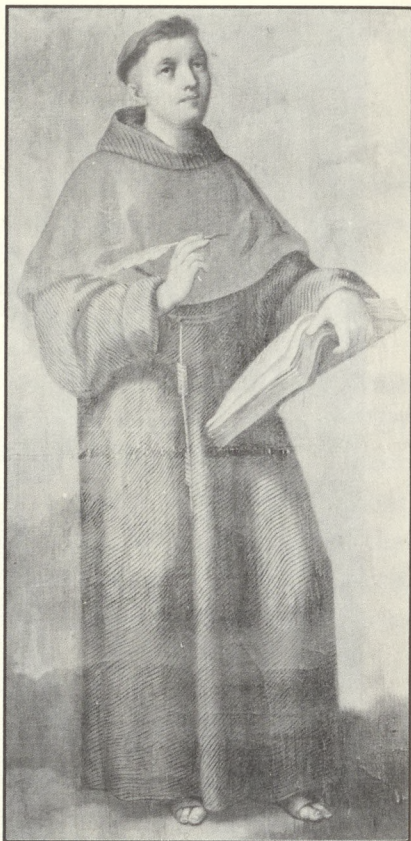


Figure 15. Saint Bonaventure, painting in the museum of Mission Santa Barbara. (Photograph by Kurt Baer, courtesy SBMAL)



Figure 16. Saint Bonaventure, statue on a side altar, Mission Dolores, San Francisco. (Photograph by Wm. B. Dewey, courtesy Bellerophon Books)

Bonaventure had at least one important university named for him in the United States, near Buffalo in upstate New York, which serves as a center for the study of his writings. In fact, in recent decades there have been complete editions of his works published and much work has been expended on removing spurious attributions from old lists. The last two centuries have seen little of note in pictorial representations of the saint. Those who are interested in him remain a small and rather closed group.

NOTES

Abbreviations

AGN	Archivo General de la Nación
ASH	Archivo de la Segretaría de Hacienda
CSF	Convento de San Fernando
DSF	Documentos de San Fernando
SBMAL	Santa Barbara Mission Archives Library

1. For the life of the saint the principal authority used has been *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., 1913), II, pp. 648-654.
2. *Lázio, Guida d'Italia* (Milan: Consociazione Turistica Italiana, 1935), pp. 145-146.
3. An extensive collection of representations of Saint Bonaventure may be found in *S. Bonaventura 1274-1974 - I, Iconografia Bonaventuriana* (Grottaferrata: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1973), *passim*.
4. F. Pistolesi, *Sixtus Quintus - XIII Decembris MDXXI - XIII Decembris MCMXXI - Album* (Rome: Scuola Tipografica Salesiana, 1921), pl. LXXX.
5. E.g. cf. Diego Angulo Iñiguez and Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, *Historia de la pintura española - Escuela madrileña del primer tercio del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Instituto Diego Velázquez, 1969), pl. 203 (The Immaculate Conception and Saint Bonaventure by Luis Fernández in the parish church of Cerreros, prov. of Avila) and pl. 224 (Various saints, including Bonaventure, with their comments on the Immaculate Conception, by Angelo Nardi in the parish church of La Guardia in the province of Toledo).
6. For a discussion of the pictorial program cf. Santiago Sebastián, *Contrarreforma y barroco* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1981), pp. 228-94.

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7. Nicholas Jean de Dieu Sault (1769-1851), French soldier; marshall of France (1804-).
8. Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, *La pintura española fuera de España* (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1958), pl. 129.
9. Jonathan Brown, *The Golden Age of Painting in Spain* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991) pl. 142.
10. Julián Gállego and José Gudiol, *Zurbarán*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1977), fig. 25.
11. *Ibid.*, fig. 26.
12. *Ibid.*, fig. 27.
13. *Ibid.*, fig. 28.
14. Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, *La obra pictórica completa de Murillo* (Barcelona and Madrid: Editorial Noguer, 1978), pl. XXXI.
15. Cf. Norman Neuerburg, "The Angel on the Cloud, or 'Anglo-American Myopia' Revisited: A Discussion of the Writings of James L. Nolan," *Southern California Quarterly*, Spring 1980 (vol. LXII, no. 1) pp. 30-31.
16. Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Buenaventura* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: Mission Santa Barbara, 1930) p. 3.
17. Archivo General de la Nación, ASH 283, 67, f. 9 vso. n.b. copies of this and following are in the Kurt Baer papers at the Santa Barbara Mission Archive Library. These papers reflect research conducted by Mr. Baer at the National Archives in Mexico City.
18. Martin J. Morgado, *Junípero Serra - A Pictorial Biography* (Monterey, Calif.: Siempre Adelante Publishing, 1991) fig. 114.

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19. AGN, ASH, San Ferndo. III, f. 80 vso.
20. AGN, ASH, Leg. 281 - 60.
21. AGN, ASH, 283, 15 v.
22. AGN, ASH, CSF Vol XIII p. 4; DSF Ser. 2 Vol. XV, no. 14, pp. 276-277, Informe of 1774.
23. AGN, ASH, Leg. 281, f. 51.
24. SBMAL, Inventory of Mission San Carlos, 1835.
25. AGN, ASH, San Fern III ff. 70 vso-72; also SBMAL, Informe 1791.
26. Copy in SBMAL.
27. AGN, ASH, XIV, p. 53; also SBMAL Informe 1794.
28. Request in AGN, ASH, Leg. 283; addition in Mission San José, *Libro de Patentes*, p. 367, Bancroft Library; in SBMAL inventories of 1833 and 1842.
29. AGN, ASH, Leg. 281 f. 51 and ASH CSF XVII, p. 51.
30. SBMAL, Informe 1825.
31. AGN, ASH, Leg. 333-15.
32. SBMAL, *Libro de Patentes de la Misión de San Luis Rey*, inventory of 1844, p. 323.
33. SBMAL, Inventory of 1858.
34. SBMAL, Informe of 1810.

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Figure 5. Saint Bonaventure, woodcut from a Majorcan *Goig*.

Doctor y Sant singular
 Seráfich Bonaventura;
 Vullau a Jesús pregar
 Nos don del cel la ventura

✻ ✻ ✻

[translation]

Saint Bonaventure, Seraphic Doctor,
 please pray to Jesus to give us good fortune
 as the gift from heaven



Figure 12. Saint Bonaventure, painting from Mission San Antonio, now at Mission San Miguel. (Photograph by Wm. B. Dewey, courtesy Bellerophon Books)

THE
VENTURA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY

OXNARD
PUBLIC LIBRARY



1907-1992

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THE
VENTURA COUNTY
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QUARTERLY

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A History of the Oxnard Public Library
1907-1992

BY
MADELINE MIEDEMA

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"The world of books is the most remarkable creation of man: nothing else that he builds ever lasts. Monuments fall--nations perish--civilizations grow old and die out. After an era of darkness new races build others: but in the world of books are volumes that live on--still as young and fresh as the day they were written--still telling men's hearts of the hearts of men centuries dead...."

Clarence Day

This Issue of the *Quarterly*
Celebrates the Opening of the New
Oxnard Public Library
March 7, 1992

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

MISS MADELINE MIEDEMA came to Oxnard when she was nine years of age. Her father, the Reverend William Miedema, was minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Oxnard and, at the same time, pastor of the Community Presbyterian Church in Hueneme.

Miss Miedema was educated in the Oxnard Schools, Occidental College and the University of California at Berkeley. She was a teacher and an administrator in the Oxnard Union High School district; after her retirement she was elected to two terms on that district's board of trustees. She has a long-time interest in the history of the area and has acted as consultant on many VCHS publications regarding Oxnard and environs. Miss Miedema has contributed several articles to the VCHS *Quarterly*: "Hueneme as a Grain Port" (November 1957 and February 1958); "Oxnard's Golden Decade" (Spring 1980); "Some Neat Sort of Structure" (Fall 1988).

At the present writing Miss Miedema is president of the Board of Trustees of the Oxnard Public Library.

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The following persons gave valuable help in preparing this article: Margaret McKinna, Sandy Cooluris, Norma Oakley, Edwin Hughes, the staffs of the Oxnard School District and of the Oxnard Public Library.

A GIANT STEP FORWARD: A HISTORY OF THE OXNARD PUBLIC LIBRARY 1907-1992

BY
MADELINE MIEDEMA

THE BEGINNING: ANDREW CARNEGIE'S GENEROUS OFFER

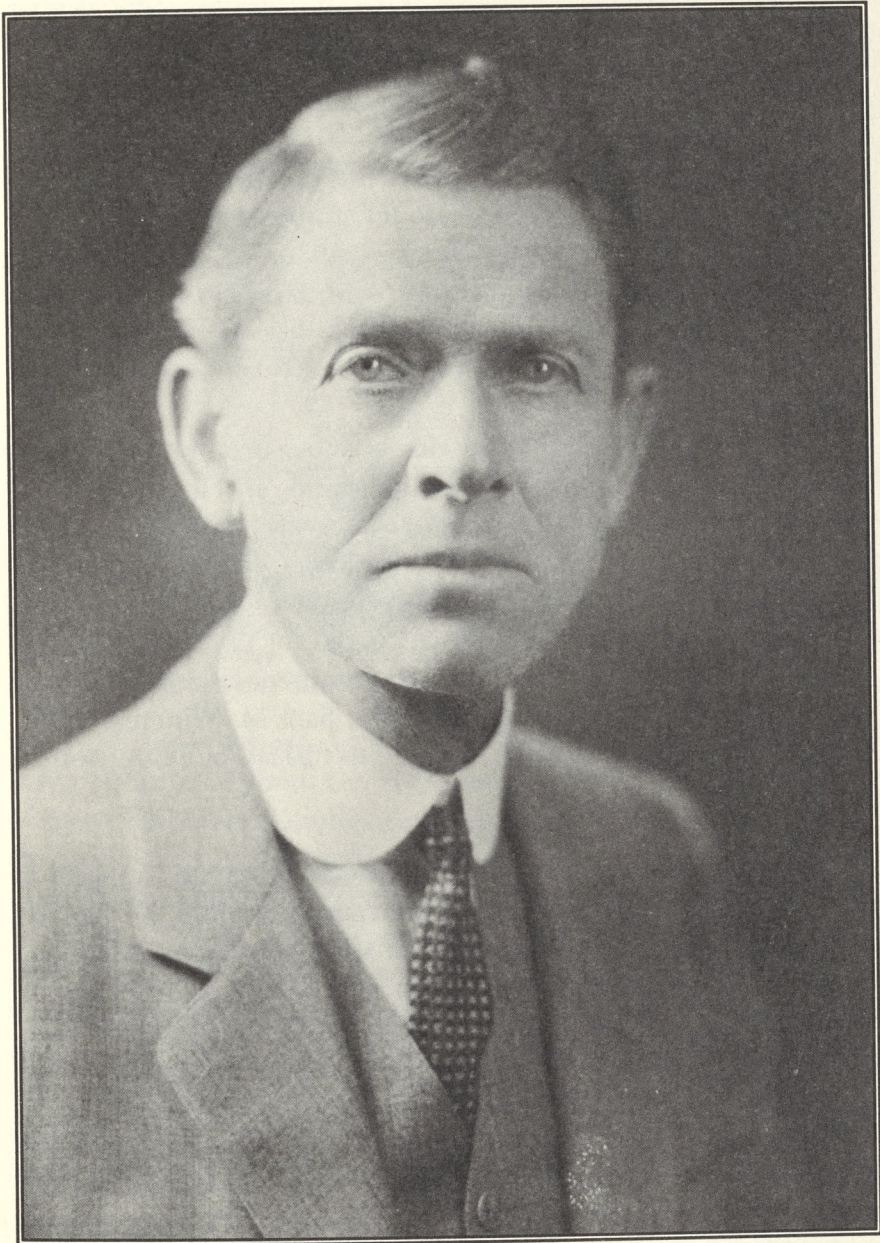
IN 1904 A GROUP OF PEOPLE IN OXNARD gathered together to discuss taking advantage of Andrew Carnegie's offer to build a library in eligible small towns across the United States. The town of Oxnard, founded in 1898 and incorporated in 1903, had been built around the Oxnard brothers' new \$2,000,000 beet sugar factory and already had a population of 2,200. Horse-drawn water wagons sprinkled the unpaved streets, and the east side of the plaza had a row of hitching posts for horses. There were seventeen saloons in Oxnard, most of them on Fifth Street between Saviers Road and B Street, where factory workers and farm hands celebrated on Saturday nights. China Alley made the city notorious for gambling and opium use.

But Oxnard had another side. There were numerous churches, an auditorium for "theatrical fare" and concerts, regular W.C.T.U. (Women's Christian Temperance Union) meetings, a Shakespeare Club and the group of people who were interested in building a library. The latter were led by Richard B. Haydock, newly-elected president of the City Board of Trustees--and thereby first Mayor of Oxnard--and by Isaac W. Stewart, City Attorney. Richard Haydock was asked to write a letter to Andrew Carnegie requesting information regarding the steps necessary to obtain money for a library. He sent this request to Skibo, Scotland, Carnegie's residence at that time.

Andrew Carnegie, who had come to the United States from Scotland and had made a fortune in the manufacture of steel, was led by his belief in philanthropy to donate ninety per cent of his fortune "for the improvement of mankind." His most famous philanthropy was probably the gift of money for building free public libraries across the country. Between 1886 and 1919 there were 1679 Carnegie libraries built in the United States, 142 of which were in California. Carnegie believed that free public libraries and free public schools were the cornerstones of democracy.¹

Carnegie's secretary, James Bertram, replied to Mr. Haydock by December 1904. Apparently he sent the "Schedule of Questions" which all applicants were expected to complete. Mr. Haydock said that in his reply he "set forth the facts concerning the location of the sugar factory, the number of men working there in the fields, the recent incorporation of the town, its rapid growth and its financial inability to provide for such an institution."² The city was also required to make certain guarantees. One was the guarantee that the City would levy an annual library tax equal to one-tenth of Carnegie's gift in order to maintain the library. A second requirement was the purchase of a site. The questionnaire also requested information on public interest in a library, as evidenced by public subscription to furnish the library.

Plans to fulfill these requirements were put in motion immediately. In February 1905 Mayor Haydock and City Attorney Stewart were authorized to take care of all correspondence, papers and "instruments" necessary for the application. On February 21, 1905, the City Council passed a resolution stating that they would make an annual tax levy sufficient to provide not less than \$1,000 for the support of the library. In October 1905 payment was



Richard B. Haydock

authorized for lots on the northeast corner of North Fifth Street and C Street. As near as can be determined, the City paid \$3,400 for three lots. Two were owned by the Colonia Improvement Company and were purchased for \$2,500. Henry T. Oxnard and his associates donated their share of the cost (\$1,861.63) and the other stockholders in the Colonia Improvement Company, Aranetta Hill and E. R. Hill, were paid \$638.67 for their share in the lots. The owner of the third lot, a Mr. Cryer of Los Angeles, was paid \$900 for his property. The Oxnard *Courier* called the site, "the most sightly and convenient location in the entire town."³

Mr. Haydock exerted great efforts to be sure that the citizens of Oxnard were behind the library movement. He spoke to the Shakespeare Club and to a "mass meeting" of the ladies of Oxnard, who proceeded to organize a Women's Civic League. The latter opened a free public reading room in anticipation of a public library. Mr. Haydock also arranged for the beginning of a subscription campaign. A number of prominent citizens began the contribution list: Thomas A. Rice \$250, Sam M. Wineman \$100, the Lehmann Brothers \$100, Achille Levy \$150, James A. Donlon \$150.

Sometime in early 1906, Mr. Haydock mailed his answers to the "Schedule of Questions." By February 25, 1906, he had his reply from James Bertram stating that Mr. Carnegie would be glad to give \$10,000 to erect a free public library in Oxnard if the city would agree to a \$1,000 a year tax levy and would provide a site. In some consternation the City Council passed its resolutions all over again and added that the site had already been dedicated for library use. By March 6, 1906, Carnegie notified the Council that he had placed \$10,000 to the credit of the City of Oxnard and had instructed his cashier, R. A. Franks, to honor calls from Oxnard authorities to the extent of \$10,000.



Earliest known image of proposed library, from *The Cardinal & Gold* (Oxnard High School Annual) 1906.

The *Courier* reported that "Mr. Haydock is very busy getting information as to plans, etc. He is making exhaustive investigation of other libraries of similar cost and dimensions and hopes soon to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion as to whatever style of architecture will be best for the purpose."⁴ He found Franklin P. Burnham, a Los Angeles architect who specialized in library architecture. Mr. Haydock wrote in his reminiscences, "I had in mind the type of building I would like to see, and made a sketch of it which I took down to Mr. Burnham. When I handed it to him, he looked at it a moment and said, 'Mr. Haydock, I am delighted; for some time I have been hoping someone would come in wanting a library of this type.'"⁵

The City Council adopted Burnham's plans on May 22, 1906, and opened bids for the library's construction. There was only one bid by June 12, 1906--that of Thomas H. Carroll. The contract for the building was \$13,855. It was said that the high price was due to the demand for materials and labor resulting from the San Francisco earthquake and fire on April 18, 1906. Mr. Haydock immediately sent the blueprints to Carnegie with a request for \$5,000 additional. Carnegie granted \$2,000 more, and the city paid for all expenses above \$12,000. Oxnard was lucky to have sent the blueprints to Carnegie and James Bertram in 1906, for in later years Bertram warned against building "Greek temples" for libraries. The Oxnard Library eventually cost \$16,016 to build and \$1,353.09 to furnish.

By June 13, 1906, the pouring of the concrete foundation had begun, and the first load of brick had been delivered to the front of the building on C Street. The walls were to be of rough brick, ready to receive the coat of lime and cement for a "mission" finish. The *Courier* reported, "Professor Haydock was there almost every hour during his vacation and has passed upon a foundation that will last for all time."⁶

While this was happening, Mr. Haydock said, "I went to the state convention of librarians in Redlands during the Christmas holidays and secured the services of Miss Clara Field on recommendation of state officials. She proved to be very efficient and we were sorry to lose her a few years later...."⁷

The City Council was busy in the fall of 1906. In August they established a Library Fund Tax of 15 cents on each \$100 of assessed valuation. In December they appointed the first Library Board: James A. Donlon, T. E. Walker, Isaac W. Stewart, Leon Lehmann and Richard Haydock. And on December 26, 1906, they



Thomas H. Carroll and his wife, Lenora. Mr. Carroll was an Oxnard contractor who built the Pagoda in Oxnard Plaza, the Santa Clara Church, the Carnegie Library and many other buildings in early Oxnard.

passed Ordinance No. 26 which established the Oxnard Public Library. Unhappily, Richard Haydock, after doing so much for the establishment of a library in Oxnard, resigned from the Council at that same meeting in order to become principal of Ventura Elementary School. When he returned to Oxnard in 1911 to become principal of Oxnard's elementary school, he was reappointed to the Library Board and remained a member until 1959--a term of 48 years!

THE LIBRARY OPENS

On May 15, 1907, the Oxnard Public Library was opened. It had 237 members, 1099 books and the capacity to hold 5000 books. The *Courier* reported that a "stately monument to art and literature is dedicated to the people in a simple yet beautifully impressive manner."⁸ The building inside and out was a blaze of light and color. Mr. Haydock told how the library was obtained and Mayor Samuel B. Bagnall thanked the citizens for their help. He also revealed that the basement was to hold the city offices. When the Council saw Burnham's plans, it was discovered that a large area in the basement was available for city offices--a Council meeting room, and offices for the City Recorder, the Deputy City Clerk and the City Marshall. The *Courier* reported that in 1906-1907 the City Council remodeled the basement for a city hall.⁹ Had Carnegie known of this use of the library basement, the city might possibly never have received the \$12,000 to build the library, since he was adamantly opposed to joint use of his buildings with city offices. James Bertram did, in fact, contact the California state librarian for assistance in removing city offices from the Carnegie library in Upland, California. But the basement of the Oxnard Library remained a city hall until 1949--42 years!

Clara C. Field, Oxnard's first librarian, was a graduate of the Pratt Institute Library School in New York. She was hired for a



The Carnegie Library shortly after completion in 1907. The Oxnard Elementary School is in the background.

term of six months at a salary of \$60 per month for the purpose of organizing the library. She worked so well that the Library Board kept extending her contract until she resigned in January 1911. She was on hand for the January 28, 1907, meeting of the Board, and she was authorized to purchase a typewriter, chairs, window shades, newspaper racks, a carpet and eventually books, although many of the first books were donated by the Oxnard Circulating Library, the Women's Civic League and individuals.

On January 11, 1908, Ethel Carroll, daughter of the library contractor Thomas Carroll, was employed as an assistant for \$10 per month. When Clara Field resigned, Ethel Carroll was made City Librarian on January 1, 1911, and remained in this position until her death in 1935. Richard Haydock said of her in his reminiscences, "Miss Carroll's many years as librarian seemed to make her an essential part of the institution, and the library seemed to be a part of her very life."¹⁰ In 1923 he said that she had started as an apprentice and had become an "enthusiastic



Ethel Carroll, Oxnard City Librarian 1911-1935

librarian." She attended California library conferences every year and attended workshops at her own expense.¹¹

CITY OR COUNTY?

The Oxnard Library began what might be called an "outreach" program early in its existence. In 1907, 25 books were loaned to the American Beet Sugar Company reading room at Fifth and Saviers Road and to the Citizens Club. In 1909 the library began to establish deposit stations, later raised to the level of branches, in various cities: Hueneme, Moorpark, Saticoy, Camarillo, Somis and Santa Susanna. For example, a rotating collection of 25 books was sent weekly to the Hueneme library, which was maintained by the Women's Improvement Club. The shipping and care of the books, as well as the cost of the freight, were the responsibility of the branch.

When the Ventura County Library was formed in 1915 by vote of the county supervisors, all branches except the one in Hueneme became part of the county system. Hueneme did not join the county system until 1936. Oxnard remained a city library; it said that it did not want to pay for services the city was already providing. The county library claimed that "Oxnard was functioning as if it were a county library."¹²

It must have been an interesting day in April 1915 when the question of a county library was considered by the supervisors in the newly-built county courthouse at the top of California Street in Ventura. Almost every city and village in Ventura County favored a county library with the exception of Oxnard, Hueneme and Somis. The *Ventura Free Press* reported, "There were never before so many women in the courthouse since the date of its dedication. They flocked in droves and bevvies from all parts of the county. No section but was represented and no club in the county

but that furnished one or more delegates. They came in their very best raiment, of course, and it was really in the nature of a fashion show, too, or a gorgeous afternoon reception.... Neither was there a dearth of men.¹³ Those in favor of a county library were wearing badges of yellow gold ribbon. "Oxnard was also on hand, men and women in numbers...and stoutly refusing to be beribboned by the rustling workers 'for.'"¹⁴ A majority of the supervisors were in favor of a county library. Supervisor Roussey of Oxnard said, "that if he could be shown that the library was not under state control he would favor it."¹⁵

In these early years the Oxnard library also had begun to diversify its collections. There were pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, sheet music for piano, violin, orchestra and voice, phonograph records and mounted pictures.

Work with school children began in January 1911 when the story hour was made a monthly feature of the juvenile department; the average attendance was 30. By 1914 interest in the story hour had increased so that it was held twice a month, and by 1916 it was held every Saturday in the children's room. And in 1921, the library began to work with elementary schools. Sets of supplementary readers not on the state list but which were adapted for use with "foreign" students were purchased for teachers to check out for classroom use. In 1926 the librarian and some teachers drew up a reading list for each grade. Those students who read the entire list were given a library diploma. In 1928 the library gave out 278 diplomas. By 1929 the librarian was making two visits per week to each school to change books and collect the reports. Thus began a long cooperation with Oxnard schools that exists to this day.

In November 1911 the state librarian reported that the Oxnard Library had a circulation for the quarter of 6044 books, which was the largest circulation of all the cities in the state with a population of 6500 and under. The *Courier* credited this to community support, excellent organization on the part of the librarians and the wide scope of the book collection.¹⁶

Sol Sheridan in his *History of Ventura County* wrote that for the Oxnard branch libraries "the service given was of the very highest class. Class, in fact, has always been characteristic of the Oxnard Library."¹⁷

ADDITION TO THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE

By 1920 the library was "hampered by lack of space."¹⁸ By 1922 Oxnard had nearly doubled in population; the library had 14,500 books and 2949 cardholders. It had a circulation greater than that of the county library, but a smaller building. In 1917 a lot to the east of the library was purchased by the city in order to provide space for enlargement of the library. The city paid \$3,500 for a lot owned by Dr. A. W. Avery and Dr. H. M. Staire. A letter was sent to the Carnegie Corporation requesting money for an addition to the library. Although the Carnegie Corporation no longer gave money for library buildings, James Bertram did reply. Miss Carroll reported, "At one time help was sought from Carnegie. It was refused for the reason that the building was deemed too ornamental and not according to Carnegie specifications, also that too much space was wasted."¹⁹

In the election of May 9, 1922, library bonds in the amount of \$23,000 passed with a vote of 160 to 22. Alfred H. Priest, the architect who had designed the pagoda in Oxnard Plaza, drew plans for the addition and Thomas H. Carroll was again the contractor. Those who visited the expanded library on opening



The extension on the east side of the library was completed in 1923 after a bond election provided funds for this purpose.

day, April 13, 1923, found many changes. There was a new reference room east of the main reading room, an extended main floor with new book stacks, new workrooms on the northeast and a mezzanine floor for storing school book sets and unbound magazines. In the south end of the mezzanine was a room to be used for the children's story hour. City offices were extended in the basement, and there was space for the Chamber of Commerce. However, the basement held part of the library. The *Courier* wrote, "The newspapers and men's smoking room is [sic] an important feature of the library, located in the basement. The entrance [the circular staircase] to this room is just inside the main entrance and is convenient for businessmen and others who enjoy reading the papers and puffing a good cigar at the same time. Miss Carroll states that this department is much used...."²⁰

After the enlargement of the library, Miss Carroll was able to increase the library activities among children. In December 1925

she was authorized to employ an assistant with training in children's work.

In November 1926 Ethel Carroll reported to the Board that "the U.S. report on library statistics showed the [Oxnard] library to be fourth in point of circulation per capita and second in point of non-fiction circulation per capita."²¹ It is presumed that this rank of second and fourth was in the United States, not just California.

In March 1929 a new unpaid apprentice, who had just graduated from St. Joseph's Institute, went to work in the library--Emilie Ritchen. Margaret McKinna, a long-time employee of the



The interior of the Carnegie Library before it was enlarged. The entrance to the circular staircase is in front. It led down to the newspaper reading room in the basement.



The interior of the Carnegie Library after completion of the extension.

library, recalled that Miss Carroll gradually taught the apprentices the shelving of books, mending, alphabetizing, card cataloguing and accessioning. Emilie Ritchen was to be connected with the Oxnard Library for the next forty years. On June 1, 1930, she was placed on the city payroll as a part-time assistant at a salary of \$75 per month.

"Miss Carroll was actually the one who built up the Oxnard Library...,²² said Emilie Ritchen. And Margaret McKinna found that Ethel Carroll was a "working boss"; she would not ask anyone to do what she could not or would not do herself. The California Library Association (CLA) considered her so skilled at her craft that they accepted any woman she had trained as qualified to receive the CLA library certificate, and several women found good positions in other library systems. Mrs. McKinna said that Ethel Carroll was especially interested in children's library

work. This is evidenced by the fact that she began the story hour in 1911 and by 1929 was making twice-weekly visits to schools. It is said that she read all the children's book reports herself. In 1923 she was elected president of the Municipal Libraries Section of CLA.

In 1953, while attending the national convention of the American Library Association in Los Angeles, Emilie Ritchen heard the keynote speaker, Erle Stanley Gardner, say that "he felt greatly indebted to librarians; in particular Oxnard's Miss Carroll [who] had really introduced him to the joy of reading."²³

Ethel Carroll died suddenly on September 7, 1935. On October 23 Miss Frances Woodworth was hired as librarian at a salary of \$150 per month. She had graduated from the Los Angeles Library School and at the time of her hiring was in charge of the Los Angeles City Library branch called Angeles Mesa.

In the same year the downstairs reading room was closed because it was too difficult to maintain discipline among the boys who frequented it. The following year the library appealed to Mr. Bannister, principal of Oxnard High School, for help because the high school students were using the library as a social meeting place. Mr. Bannister, also a member of the Library Board, said he would try to impress upon the students that the library must be used for reference work.

WORLD WAR II

With the advent of World War II, thousands of servicemen came through Port Hueneme and various training schools such as Mira Loma Flight Academy, and were shipped out to the Pacific war zone. The library attempted to help these servicemen, and the

families who came to stay with them, while they were in training. Certain types of books became popular: technical books, maps, atlases, guide books, escape-type fiction and, surprisingly, some 2800 books of music. The annual report for 1943 states, "As a public library we have gained many new friends through our service to the men stationed here and to their families who came to be with them."

The Oxnard Library was one of 1200 libraries throughout the country chosen by the U.S. government as a War Information Center because, "the library of 1942 must also be an active agent in promoting the actual work of defense."²⁴ A Victory Book Drive was instituted to collect books to ship out with the men on the way to war. One year 922 volumes were collected and shipped, and another year 926 volumes were contributed. In 1943 the annual report indicated that there was a "donation of two bushels of costume jewelry to the navy for barter with the natives!"²⁵

Service to schools seems to have continued in spite of some handicaps. Because of the rationing of tires and gasoline, the library discontinued its weekly delivery of books and the school truck took up the task. The library even bought a bicycle to enable the staff to contact teachers regarding book reviews and the children's book program.

During the war years the library closed at 6:00 PM, and the board approved the taking out of war damage insurance for \$40,000.

In September 1943 Frances Woodworth resigned, and on October 12 of that year Emilie Ritchen was appointed Head Librarian. When Emilie retired at the end of 1968, she said that she had "loved every minute"²⁶ of her forty years on the staff of

the Oxnard Public Library. (In 1941 she had taken a six-weeks leave to study library techniques at the University of Oregon. She took special courses in children's library work, and she held a library certificate from the California Library Association.)

POST-WAR GROWTH AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS

After the close of World War II, the library resumed its normal activities. It sponsored an interesting series of talks for adults called "Authors and Readers Meet." Every other Wednesday a local author would speak to a very responsive audience and answer questions. The program was organized by the California Library Association and the Authors Guild. It was apparently a great success but could not be continued because there were too many scheduling conflicts for the authors.

By 1949 the population of Oxnard had reached 20,000--more than double that of 1940. In 1947 the City adopted a city manager type of government, and it soon became apparent that the basement of the Carnegie Library was too small to hold all of the City staff. On October 1, 1949, the City offices were moved to the old Roosevelt School, which the city had purchased. The library quickly employed architect R. A. Polley to draw up plans for remodeling the basement. Plans were approved by the Library Board and the City Council, and in September Albert Schuster won the contract to remodel the basement for \$14,986.

The old spiral staircase, called the "Mary Roberts circular staircase," was finally removed from the foyer and a more conventional stairway built elsewhere. The west end of the remodeled basement became a full-fledged children's department. Mrs. Norma Oakley, children's librarian, was in charge. Miss Ritchen said that she wanted "a place so cheerful that they will just want to spend a lot of time there."²⁷ There were 16,000



Emilie Ritchen (right) and Norma Oakley

children's books, some small tables and low shelves. The east side of the basement became a small auditorium. Here the children's story hours were held twice a week in the summer.

In 1947 the city adopted a Position Classification Plan and Pay Plan as recommended by the California State Personnel Board. At first the Library Board asked not to be included in the plan, but later joined rather reluctantly. In 1950 the board accepted the Basic Salary Ranges for library employees as recommended by the State Personnel Board. All employees received increases in their wages, but the Board no longer discussed or determined salaries or the hiring of staff.

Through the years the Library Board has been determined to maintain its independence. In 1953-54 the Board discussed a suggestion made by the City Manager that the Board be enlarged

to seven members and henceforth be known as the Fine Arts Commission. The Board did not approve the suggestion and it was never carried out. In 1954 the Board turned down a request from the County Board of Supervisors that the Oxnard Library join the County Library System.

By 1954 television had begun to make inroads in circulation, and for a while librarians feared that TV would supplant libraries. But patrons gradually returned with a renewed interest in "how-to-do" books, consumer research and consumer reports and movies, especially historical movies. Miss Ritchen said, "We at the Oxnard Library are always trying to stay ahead of the demands of our readers."²⁸

Early in her term as City Librarian, Emilie Ritchen put new life into the children's story hour, the vacation reading program and the school visits. She believed that the librarian's job offered an opportunity to bring the best literature to the young people of the community. She said that if youngsters in the first grade made an effort to come to the library regularly, they would do so automatically in years to come.²⁹ Probably the most important accomplishment of Emilie Ritchen during her term as city librarian was her work with children. Many Oxnard citizens today remember her visits to their elementary school classrooms to read or tell stories. It is not surprising that in 1989 the Oxnard Elementary School Board named its newest school the Emilie Ritchen School.

In June 1944 Emilie Ritchen gathered 65 children together in the small children's room and told stories illustrated with pictures. She found the children "hard to persuade to go home."³⁰ It was possible to hold the story hour twice a week during the summer.

A reading club for older children was organized to encourage them to read current books and to learn about the library.

All kinds of visual devices were created by the library staff to lure children to the story hour and to encourage reading. In 1947 they built a miniature storyland in the foyer of the library, complete with a castle and all the famous characters from children's books. After a child had read ten books, his name was placed on one of the characters. At the end of summer he could claim his character. Mrs. Oakley, children's librarian, said, "We try to make the library a kind of magical world--because it really is."³¹

Other summers there were other themes, a different one each year. And at the end of vacation time certificates were given to participants in the reading program, and prizes such as a book, were given to those who had read the most books. Each year an increasing number of children received certificates.

During the school year Norma Oakley and Emilie Ritchen visited schools, usually one a week. Teachers would come to the library to check out books for children in their classes, and the two librarians would then visit the classroom--mostly kindergarten through third grade--to read or tell stories.

THE GROWING NEED FOR EXPANDED FACILITIES

When the library acquired the use of the basement in the Carnegie building, the advertisement of a story hour brought 400 children one day. Emilie said, "There were so many children in the library that if you picked up your foot you weren't sure you could get it down again."³² In 1954 at the last story hour of the summer there was a party with ice cream and cookies. One small boy approached Norma Oakley and said, "This is the very nicest

library I have ever been in, but this is the first library I have ever been in."³³

After World War II the population of Oxnard grew by leaps and bounds. By 1950 there were 20,000 residents and by 1960, 40,000. In March 1955 the Library Board minutes mentioned for the first time the need for relocation of the Carnegie Library. In 1956 a bookmobile was purchased for \$6,931. It carried 1400-1600 books and in a sense served as Oxnard's first branch library. It stopped at or near every elementary school every other week and turned out to be even more successful than originally anticipated. But the library building itself could no longer hold its growing book collection and had fallen below normal library standards.

Around 1957 the Library Board determined that a new library building should hold 100,000 books and that, "the most desirable plan would be to acquire property in the immediate vicinity of the present location and construct a modern building along simple lines...one that would lend itself to efficient, economical operation and would be built on street level to make it accessible and convenient for people of all ages."³⁴

The site for the new building caused much discussion. In 1959 a model of a library built by the Planning Commission was displayed in the library lobby showing the new building in the center of the Plaza. Patrons of the library registered 90% approval of this site! In 1960 a new civic center plan located the building on the east side of C Street between Second and Third Streets. The Library Board accepted this location with some misgivings. They had wanted a site near the center of the business district, but the city manager assured them that downtown Oxnard was expected to extend from Wooley Road to First Street.

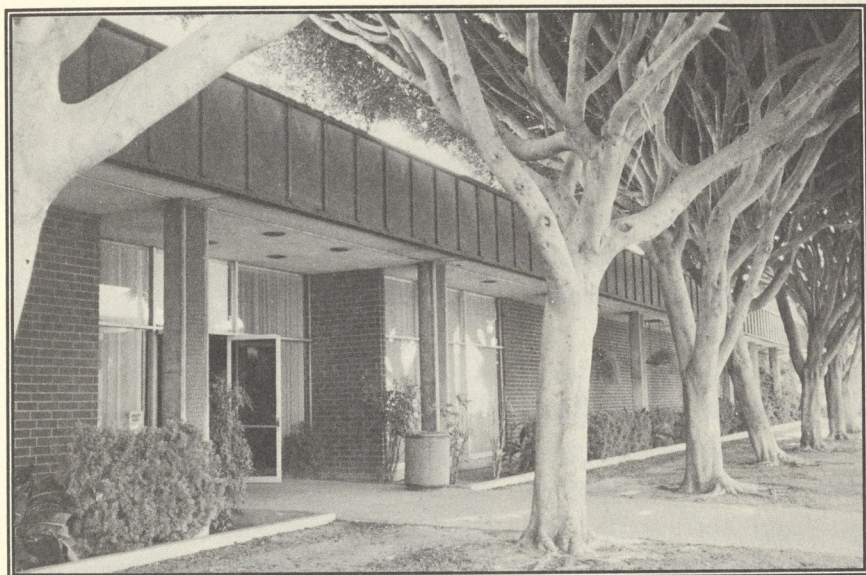
The C Street site was purchased in 1961. The architectural firm of Miller and Crowell was given the contract to design the library. The plan called for a building of red brick with a copper fascia running the length of the roof line and no windows. It was thought that windows would take up space which could be used for bookshelves. However, by popular demand, a modest amount of glass was added. The construction contract was awarded to Ralph Viola. The cost of the building, including land, construction and furnishings, was \$372,000. It was financed through the city budget, thereby avoiding a bond election.

In February 1963 the Library was closed for one week while a crew of staff members packed 60,000 volumes in boxes in precise order, and labeled the boxes. Jail prisoners who volunteered for the task carried the boxes to a truck which then transported the cartons to the new building, where another group of women unpacked them and placed the books on the shelves, again in precise order.

On March 1, 1963, the furnishings of the old Carnegie Library were sold at auction. The seven-foot-high bookshelves, used books, chairs, tables and a stack of old 78 rpm records were all placed on the auction block. The purchaser of the records paid \$14 and exclaimed, "I have bought a gold mine."³⁵

A NEW LIBRARY FACILITY

The dedication of the new building was held on Saturday, March 2. The master of ceremonies was Lee Grimes, managing editor of the *Press-Courier* and a member of the Library Board. On Monday, March 4, the new library was opened to the public. The newspaper said that, "Miss Ritchen is presiding over one of Oxnard's great assets."³⁶



The front of the 1963 Oxnard Library on C Street. The Library Board wanted "a modern building...[that would]...lend itself to efficient, economical operations." They got what they wanted.

In 1968 Emilie Ritchen handed the Board her resignation, to take effect on January 1, 1969. Mrs. Audrey Lee was appointed acting Library Director until a replacement could be selected. The new director, Mr. Edwin Hughes, arrived in Oxnard in May 1968. His professional training was more extensive than that of previous head librarians since he held a Master of Science degree in Library Science from the University of Minnesota.

In February 1968, even before Emilie Ritchen retired, the Board was beginning to plan for the expansion of the five-year old library building. The Board hoped that the addition could be completed in five years. In June 1968 the City Council authorized the selection of an architect to plan the expansion, but it would be a few years before the authorization was carried out.

Edwin Hughes, the new Library Director, spent time revising the policy and procedure manuals, but in May 1969 he pointed out to the Board that the Oxnard Public Library was below the standards of the American Library Association's publication, *Small Public Library Standards* in terms of building and staff. The Board discussed various options: expansion of the library building, extension of bookmobile services and branch libraries.



Edwin Hughes, Library Director 1968-1988

1970-1980: CONTINUED GROWTH; LIMITED RESOURCES

Finally, in March 1970, the Council selected the architectural firm of Leach, Kehoe and Ticer to design a sixty-foot addition to the south end of the library. Buckley and Associates won the contract for construction for \$107,000 and completed the work in 1973. That same year the library dedicated a new, larger bookmobile, which would carry 4000 volumes and cost \$33,000. The older, smaller bookmobile was used to develop a Colonia Outreach Program. The latter was so successful that in the first six

weeks of operation 3500 books were checked out in both Spanish and English.

The years of the 1970s and 1980s were dominated by a desperate scramble to keep up with Oxnard's increasing population during a period of lean budgets. A population of 71,225 in 1970 became one of 137,468 in 1990. At the same time, with the passage of Proposition 13, the 1978-79 budget was cut 20%.

In August 1970 the Board discussed with Paul Wolven, City Manager, the possibility of a library facility in the new Colonia Multi-Purpose Center. But it was in a meeting in November 1970 with Mr. Hosford of the City Planning Division and Mr. Hocking, staff members for planning, that the Board heard even more startling predictions. The Board was told that the small addition to the library would in no way meet the needs of the future. The planners said that the 90,000 volumes in the library should have been 184,000 in 1970. They predicted that a new main library would be needed by 1975, plus one or two branches.

However, more immediate problems presented themselves to the Board. A 1977 Environmental Impact Report (EIR) suggested that the "possibility of the city's library system joining with other public libraries should be explored."³⁷ In 1978 the city proposed saving money by combining the various boards and commissions. The first proposal was to merge the Library Board with Leisure and Social Services. The second was to consolidate the Library Board, the Artworks Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission. The members of the Library Board believed that the library should remain an autonomous department as set up in the section of the Education Code which governs public libraries. Ultimately, the City Council did not follow the 1977 EIR

suggestion to join other library systems and decided to retain a separate Library Board.

In February and March 1978 the Board minutes reflect another problem. The library was found to have the lowest support of all city departments. The library director was in a lower salary classification than assistant heads of other departments. The Board, in a letter to the City Council, asked the Council to consider moving the salary of the library director to a parity with other department heads, thus "the range will recognize that the library is a major department and will add to the prestige of the department."³⁸

THE HOLT REPORT: A PROGRAM FOR ACTION

During the late 1970s the Board of Trustees began holding yearly joint meetings with the City Council in an effort to work out the various problems. The Council finally decided in 1978 to employ a library consultant, selected by the Library Board, to evaluate the current services and facilities of the library and to make recommendations for a future course of action. The City Council contracted with Raymond M. Holt and Associates, library consultants from Del Mar, California, to prepare a program for "Developing Services and Facilities for the Oxnard Public Library." In 1979 Mr. Holt presented a voluminous report, *A Program for Action: Developing Services for the Oxnard Public Library*.

Mr. Holt compared the Oxnard Library with contemporary libraries in general and with specific libraries in particular. In the latter program of evaluation he selected nine California public libraries from nine cities of comparable size (Berkeley, Burbank, Fullerton, Hayward, Inglewood, Orange, Santa Clara, Santa Monica and Sunnyvale). Oxnard in 1978 had a population of

96,400; the nine cities compared ranged from 81,000 to 112,000. Some fifty recommendations for future action were then made.

Mr. Holt considered goals and objectives, funding, personnel and staffing, collections, internal operations, services and facilities. It was obvious from Mr. Holt's evaluation and recommendations that much work needed to be done to bring the Oxnard Library up to par with contemporary libraries in cities of comparable size. He wrote, "The Oxnard Library ... is lamentably inadequate to meet the library related needs of the city's growing population in spite of the efforts of the library staff."³⁹ Again he said, "By any reasonable measuring device the library falls seriously short of most guidelines to even minimum accuracy. Unless remedial action is taken, the library's weaknesses can only be magnified as the population of the city continues to multiply."⁴⁰ And, "... the Oxnard Public Library faces a long, uphill road that must be traveled if it is to achieve the strength required to meet the needs of the future."⁴¹

The report stated, "Obviously, the primary reason [for the library's problems] is the lack of adequate funding, whatever the cause thereof."⁴² And again, "The Oxnard Public Library is among the most inadequately financed public libraries in California...."⁴³ It was found that the Oxnard Library was operating on 50% less funding than the lowest of the nine--a yearly budget of \$1,013,571 for the lowest of the nine--\$500,461 for Oxnard. The lowest per capita expenditure for the other cities was \$8.03; Oxnard's per capita was \$5.19. The recommendation was that "the Oxnard Public Library be provided with adequate financial support equal to the needs...."⁴⁴

The Holt Report also evaluated the staffing. It found the qualifications of the library staff above average and superior. But

Holt concluded that "the number of staff is below any rational minimum."⁴⁵ The staff at the time of the report was 17.5 full-time equivalents--down from 22 before Proposition 13. Of the nine libraries in comparable cities, 21 was the lowest number on the staff. With such a small number the staff could not provide adequate service or develop the collections. Since there was also a lack of clerical assistance, the professional staff was doing clerical work, evidence of the report's evaluation that there was a lack of separation between professional and non-professional responsibilities. The report recommended that the staff be gradually increased over a five-year period and be reorganized into three departments (technical services, public services, extension services) so that the skills and expertise of the staff could be used to the maximum advantage.

The report also considered the status of the library collections which it found seriously lacking in size and scope, a result no doubt of the lack of funds and staff time to devote to the collections. It found the number of books far below the accepted minimum of 2.0 volumes per capita; the Oxnard Library had 1.4 volumes per capita. Many volumes were out-of-date; 30% of the adult fiction was over twenty years old. Fiction was limited in scope, the technical collection was weak, the reference collection was adequate only for the most common questions, the periodical collection was half of what it should be and the non-print materials (recordings, videos, musical scores, microfilm and toys and games for children) were extremely limited. The report recommended that a collections development coordinator be appointed to undertake the work of solving the above problems.

The Holt Report also undertook an appraisal of the current library facilities. It was felt that the current building was too small and that it inhibited the development of library collections and

services and discouraged library use. The expansion of the C Street building was not considered feasible for several reasons: such an expansion would be only temporary (doubling the size of the existing building would give only part of the space really needed); the resulting long, narrow building would be awkward and would need excessive staff; the C Street building was not built to hold a second story, let alone a third story; a new building could be designed for new library technology. Mr. Holt surveyed sites around town and suggested the west side of Hobson Way across from the Civic Auditorium.

Over the next several years, the city did follow the four steps Holt outlined in acquiring a new main library: the acquisition of a site, the preparation of a program of information for the architect, the hiring of an architect and the determination of a source for funding. As early as December 1981, during a joint meeting of the Library Board and City Council, the matter of funding a new building was brought up. The final recommendation was that the construction of a new central library should be given the highest priority.

There were numerous other recommendations including: the development of a basic statement of goals and objectives (to be agreed upon by the Library Board and the City Council); the automation of the Circulation and the Technical Services operations; the extension of services to seniors, ethnic minorities, the economic community and the handicapped; the development of a series of programs to "merchandise" the resources of the library; the extension of the services of the bookmobiles including bilingual staff members.

PROPOSITION 13

The Holt Report was published in 1979. The timing was unfortunate since the voters of California had passed Proposition 13 the year before. This caused local governments to reduce budgets, drastically in some cases. The Oxnard Public Library suffered along with other branches of local government. The hours during which the library was open were reduced from 71.5 per week to 62. By 1988 they had increased to 68. The sheet music program, very popular from the earliest days, was eliminated; the purchase of multiple copies of popular books was restricted; visits to schools were discontinued in 1982; the small bookmobile was retired from service in 1983; Sunday programs for children and adults were discontinued in 1984. Operating budgets, however, although still below by comparison with cities of comparable size, were nearly doubled in the ten years from 1980 to 1990, from \$641,142 in 1980 to \$1,557,074 in 1990.

The Holt Report also recommended that two branch libraries be established, one in South Oxnard and one in the Colonia area. In 1974 the City had opened a Multi-Purpose Center on Colonia Road, and in 1979 one room of this center was designated the Colonia Mini-Library. This was a far cry from the 7,500 square feet recommended by Holt, but the Colonia Mini-Library is still in existence today and has a circulation of about 1200 books per month. Opening a branch in the South Oxnard area was not to occur until 1989.

The Holt Report had questioned "labor intensive" practices in Technical and Circulation Services and had recommended that these services be automated as soon as possible.⁴⁶ In 1982 California passed a Public Library Funding Act. The Oxnard Public Library qualified for funds and Ed Hughes, Library Director, decided to place the money from this source in a special

fund which could be used for automating library services in the future.

Instead of the site on Hobson Way across from the Civic Auditorium recommended by Holt, the City purchased in 1983 a six-acre site west of Ventura Road between Seventh and Ninth Streets. However, in November 1984, the city traded the proposed library site on Ventura Road for a three-acre parcel on Vineyard Avenue north of Highway 101 which would become the site of a Price Club. It was proposed by the city that a portion of the sales tax from this new business be placed in a trust fund for the acquisition of a library site and construction of a new main library. The trust fund was never established, and the city ultimately allocated a portion of the land in the new Civic Center west of A Street between Second and Third Streets for a Main Library building.

In February 1984 the City signed a contract for \$14,148 with HBW Associates, a library consulting firm from Dallas, Texas, to assemble a building program for the architect. Mr. Lee Brawner, executive director of the Oklahoma City Library System served as consultant. Mr. Brawner supported the Holt Report and recommended a new main library rather than an expansion of the C Street facility. His recommendation was for an 80,000 square foot, two-level building at a cost in the neighborhood of \$9,000,000, exclusive of the site. In the meantime, a Civic Center Master Plan, prepared by Archiplan Consultants, had submitted plans to expand the C Street facility instead of constructing a new library building. The Council approved this plan in June 1985. The Library Board requested that Mr. Brawner be permitted to make a presentation of his recommendations to city officials and to the City Council. Mr. Brawner agreed to work with the architect to design the library as a part of the Civic Center. In

February 1986 the City Council accepted HBW Associates' library building program and agreed to use it as a guide during the architectural phase of the library building program in a new Civic Center.

In May 1986 the City Council approved the selection of Whisler-Patri of San Francisco to provide architectural services for the Civic Center Project.

Library Director Ed Hughes retired in March 1988. In May 1988 Gail Warner was hired for the post. She received her degree of Master of Library Science from Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. Her first duty was to review the architectural plans for the new building.

By April 1988 the Council had approved Whisler-Patri's schematic design for the Library/Civic Center, and on June 28, 1988, they approved the design of a new 72,000 square foot library. They accepted an Architectural Services Agreement with Whisler-Patri in the amount of \$744,764. Another \$142,693 was later added to the original sum for interior design services.

On September 6, 1988, the City Council approved documents necessary to finance a new library and authorized the sale of bonds in the amount of \$11,000,000 for construction of a new 72,000 square foot library. The debt would be repaid by using residential growth fees for financing. In November 1989 the Council authorized advertising for bids, and when bids were opened in February 1990, it was found that the lowest bidder was J. R. Roberts Corporation of Laguna Hills in the amount of \$10,269,000. A contract for the construction of the library was executed on May 8, 1990. The total library project was estimated to come to \$12,343,292 including furniture and interior design.

The brick exterior of the new Main Library is designed to relate to several historic brick buildings in downtown Oxnard and to the new Transportation Center nearby. The project description reads that the new Civic Center is "organized about an axis defined by arched entry portals and a two-story vaulted library. This axis will be extended in future phases of the Civic Center development, which will include a new city hall, civic plaza...." The first floor of the library will have circulation services, multi-



Gail Warner, Library Director, 1988-present

purpose rooms, children's library. The second floor will have adult services. The building is designed to accommodate new and future forms of telecommunications. To help make the whole structure earthquake proof it rests on 80 concrete piles driven 32 feet into the ground. Whisler-Patri is the overall architectural firm, with various architects in the company helping with the plans.

AUTOMATION

By 1988, the automation account had reached \$400,000 and planning began for automating the library's cataloguing, circulation and public catalogue activities. Mr. Don Gill had been employed as a consultant in 1987, a Library Automation Project Team was organized, and from September 1988 until June 1989 workers paid by the Private Industry Council carried out retrospective conversion of the library's shelf list.

On January 29, 1990, the new automated system began functioning at the Main Library, with the South Oxnard Center Branch and the Colonia Mini-Library following in the spring.

SOUTH OXNARD CENTER

When the South Oxnard Center on the corner of Bard and Saviers Roads was built in 1989, a large room was designated as a South Oxnard Branch Library. The South Oxnard Center, designed by Rasmussen and Associates Architectural Firm and constructed by Viola, Inc., is a joint Parks and Recreation/Library project and also contains a child care center, activity rooms, a kitchen, a police communications center and a management office. The 3,777 square foot branch opened on November 28, 1989, has 2.5 full-time equivalent employees, and contains approximately 25,250 books, paperbacks, videos and cassettes. It has a circulation of around 5,500 books and non-print materials a month. This branch library is unique in having a large mural painted by the



Portion of mural by Manuel Muñoz Olivares in the Oxnard Public Library Branch in the South Oxnard Center showing Emilie Ritchen surrounded by children.

Mexican artist Manuel Muñoz Olivares. In the center of the painting is a portrait of Emilie Ritchen surrounded by children as she was in so many of her story hours. Surrounding the central portrait are eight panels depicting the history of the Oxnard area.

THE NEW MAIN LIBRARY: ANSWER TO THE HOLT REPORT

The construction of the 72,000 square foot Main Library on A Street will fulfill one of the major recommendations of the Holt Report. Its book capacity of 358,000 volumes will give the library staff the opportunity to build up the collections in ways advised by Holt, who specifically mentioned reference, business, local history, genealogy and Spanish books, as well as video, CD and tape

collections. There will be increased working space for staff and meeting rooms which will provide opportunity for programs for adults such as literacy classes and musical groups, events to interest teenagers and new programs for children such as puppet shows and more story hours.

Other recommendations have also been carried out. The reorganization of the staff was completed in 1990 and there are now four divisions: Information/Reference Services, Technical Services, Circulation Services, Public Services. This allowed better use of professional skills possessed by the staff. The Oxnard Library has broadened its contacts with other libraries through membership in the Metropolitan Cooperative Library System which provides second-level reference service, interlibrary loan services and opportunities for continuing education for staff.

So far as the size and scope of the collections are concerned, the greatest difference will come when the new Main Library opens. The C Street building was designed to hold 100,000 volumes; in 1991 it holds 245,000 volumes with 15,000 in storage. Although no collections development librarian has been hired, the staff has a collections development policy and the weeding of out-of-date materials has been undertaken.

Staffing increased from 17.5 in 1978 to 28.5 full-time equivalents by 1989, still very low by library standards.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

Over the years the Library Board and later the Holt Report had advocated the formation of a Friends of the Library organization. In 1970 the Board approved the request of the Junior Monday Club to form such a group, and for several years the Friends were active in providing such extras as children's books in Spanish, large type print books, additional story hours,

a poster contest in elementary schools for National Book Week as well as programs and receptions in the library. Although the Friends became less active in the later 1970s, the monthly book sales have continued. In 1980 Mr. Hughes reactivated the organization, and the Friends have since provided again such extras as hardware and software so the library can access on-line data base by telephone, the money to start a video collection, a computer, a television set and a piano. The funds for the above have been raised lately through white elephant sales, bazaars and continued book sales.

The Oxnard Library looks forward to meeting other goals and is in the process of developing a Five-Year Plan to direct the effort. If the Holt recommendations are followed, the specific collections need to be documented and purchased, programs for adults and children need to be implemented, outreach services to nursing homes and retirement centers should be planned, the service to schools and the school winter reading program need to be reinstated, a program for young adults should be considered and the audio-visual department enlarged. The bookmobiles have been retired, although Holt advised their expansion. The small bookmobile is now too old, and the larger bookmobile's routes were discontinued in 1989 when the South Oxnard Center Branch opened.

The Holt report gives special consideration to Oxnard's multi-ethnic population, especially the Spanish-speaking, in a lengthy article by Marion Foerster, library consultant, found in the appendices to the report. Attention is given as to how the library can serve the large Spanish-speaking segment of the community. Ten recommendations are given. The most important of these are the following: plan programs for the Spanish-speaking by working with organizations already serving them, organize an advisory

council for the Spanish-speaking and hire a coordinator for library service to this portion of the community. A good beginning has been made in the Colonia Mini-Library and in the collection of books in Spanish already purchased, but much remains to be done.

A giant step forward in solving problems listed in the Holt Report has been made by the construction of the imposing new Main Library.



Artist's rendering of entrance hall and main staircase of Oxnard's new Main Library.

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43. Holt, p. 9.
44. Holt, p. 15.
45. Holt, p. 51.
46. In 1932 Ethel Carroll had introduced the Dickman Book Charge System, and in 1968 came the electrically operated Gaylord System. These systems involved small metal clips attached to the patron's cards. The clips had the patron's number punched on them, and could be thus used in a machine to stamp the number on a book card. None of this, of course, involved computerization.

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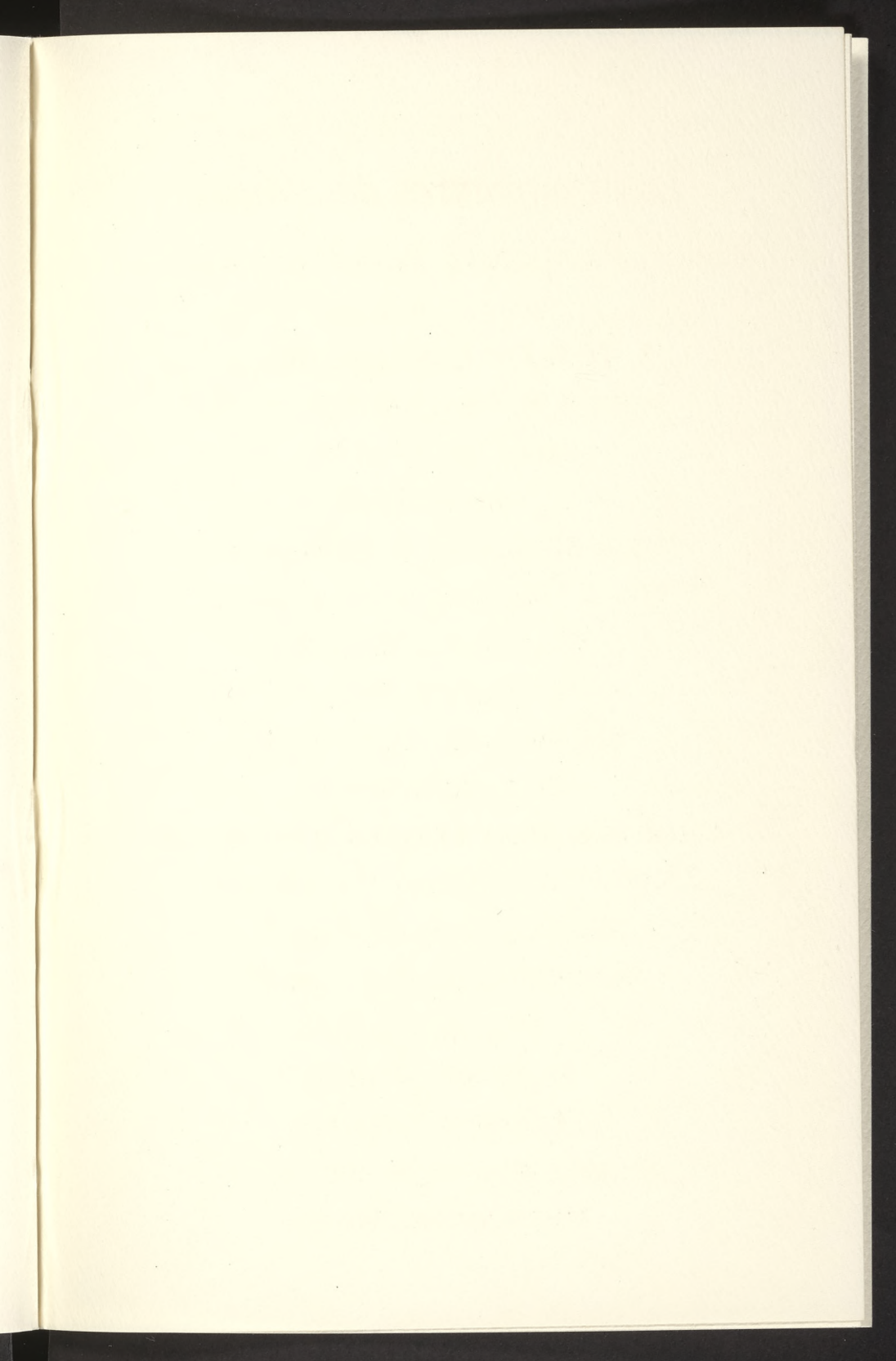
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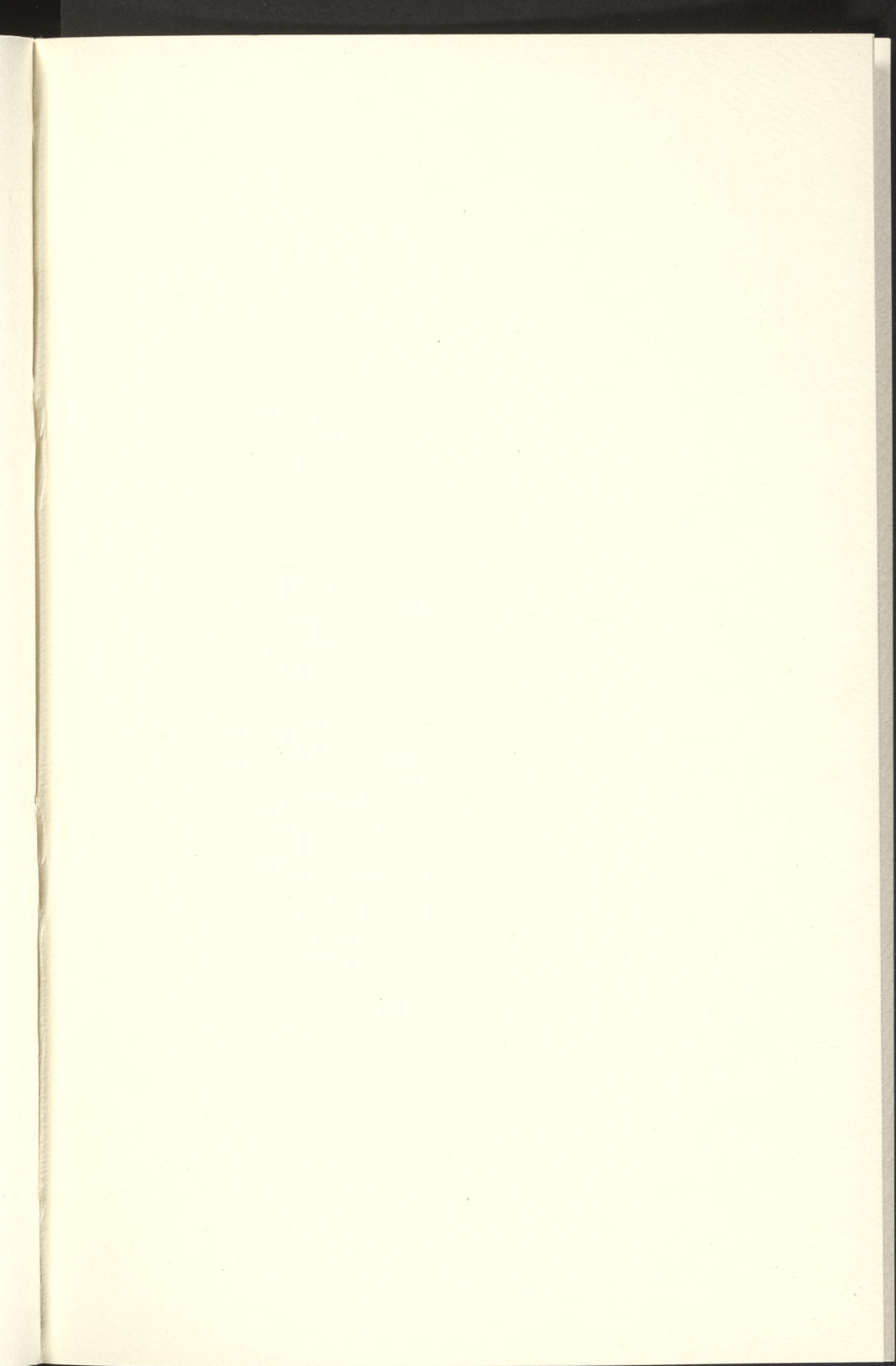
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QUARTERLY**

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THE
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QUARTERLY

MARKING THE PAST



VOL. 37, NOS. 3 & 4 SPRING & SUMMER 1992

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THE VENTURA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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A History of the Road Called El Camino Real,
El Camino Real Association and the Bells

© 1992 BY MAX R. KURILLO

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Nothing changes more constantly than the past; for the past that influences our lives does not consist of what actually happened, but of what men believe happened.

Gerald White Johnson

VOL. 37, NOS. 3 & 4 SPRING & SUMMER 1992

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

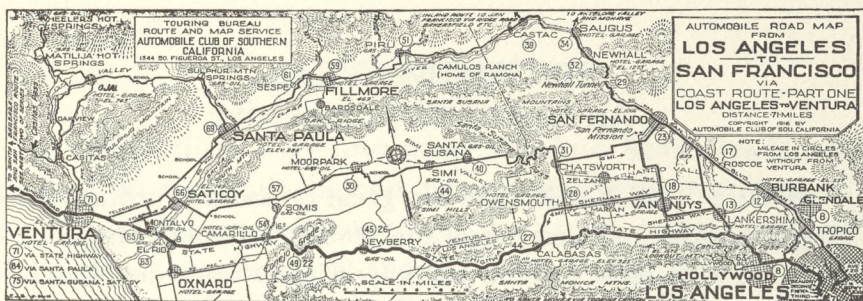
MAX KURILLO was born in Washington, D.C. Moving to Panama during World War II, he attended school with peers from many foreign countries. He came to realize that knowing something of his fellow students' life styles and countries was an exciting and rewarding challenge. This was the beginning of a life-long career of travel and work in foreign countries.

While on assignment in Saudi Arabia, he retired from the Mid East Division of the Army Corps of Engineers. During the first years of retirement, Max ventured into several working projects in New Mexico, Long Beach, California and Russia.

About two years ago, while driving with his wife to Santa Barbara, he began to question the meaning of the green bells standing along Highway 101. Not being able to obtain solid information on the subject, he decided to find out for himself. The result was an eighteen-month-long research project. A portion of the results of this project is presented here. The author does not rule out the possibility of a more extensive treatment of the bells of El Camino Real in the future.

He has led an active retirement life, appearing on television, local radio, and acting in MGM film productions. He has written brief articles on El Camino Real for Indonesian Air Line's *Discovery* magazine, for the American Society of Civil Engineers, and several Southland newspapers.

Max Kurillo came to California in 1950 and, aside from his foreign travels, continues to reside in Ventura.



INTRODUCTION

by

MAX R. KURILLO

THE HISTORY OF THE ROAD called El Camino Real and the now familiar green bells that mark its path is inseparable from the history of California. Nor can the history of these bells be told without including the Camino Real Association and the efforts and foresight of hundreds of members who have served over the course of the Association's unique history. This story must also include the Automobile Club of Southern California, the California State Automobile Association, the California Federation of Women's Clubs and the Native Sons and Daughters; all played important roles in the creation, recognition and maintenance of this historic route. It is a story of dreamers, opportunists, and sincere Californians, who are as integral to the account as the road itself.

In my year-long search for the history of these bells, more material was collected than can possibly be included here. Because of the extent of my research I can, without reservation, say this is the first time that a history of the Camino Real Association or El Camino Real bells has been presented in such detail.

The story of the bells of El Camino Real must begin with the road itself—for without this historical route they would not exist.

EL CAMINO REAL: An Historical Perspective

ABOUT THE YEAR 1236 the great crusader, Ferdinand III, king of Castile and Leon, took the Moorish city and kingdom of Cordova. Ferdinand had the pathways of the Moors converted into military roads to more readily complete the conquest. In time the roads were widened, graded and made into excellent roadways. Special laws protected travelers, and the roads became known as caminos reales, or royal roads. By the seventeenth century the caminos reales of Spain were the envy of the world, with their trees, picturesque *ventas* (inns), and national and memorial monuments.¹

Every main road leading to the city in which the King of Spain resided was known as El Camino Real. Actually, for the everyday person, El Camino Real generally meant "The Road to the King," hence the King's Road.

NEW SPAIN

Following the arrival of Hernán Cortés in 1521, the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlán was destroyed and a new capital, Mexico City, was built on the site. Antonio de Mendoza was appointed first viceroy of New Spain in 1535. By sponsoring northward exploration and developing agriculture, Mendoza extended the Spanish conquest of Mexico. Many roads emanating from the central plaza of Mexico City, and thus leading back to the Viceroy (direct representative of the King), were called El Camino Real.

EL CAMINO REAL

In reality, there were four major Caminos Reales leading to Mexico City during the Spanish Occupation.² From Mexico City, one Camino Real traveled southeast along what is now marked as "Mex. Hwy." numbers 190 and 200, into Guatemala. A second road extended from Mexico City, following closely to existing Mex. Hwy. 57 northward to Monclova and on to Piedras Negras and San Antonio, Texas, ending at Natchitoches, Louisiana. The third Camino Real, followed close to the existing Mex. Hwy. 15, along the west coast of Mexico up to what is now Tucson, Arizona. Along this Highway 15 was a small branch trail that led to the Gulf of California, and continued, via the water route, to La Paz, where the fourth Camino Real commenced. This road followed, somewhat, the existing Mex. Hwy. 1, up through and into Alta California (see fig.1).

How and why the Spanish established missions and presidios in Alta California is already well documented. Trying to trace the original footpaths of these first California trailblazers, beginning with Portolá's expedition in 1769, is difficult if not impossible. Some historians believe they have discovered portions of the original trail(s), but there are many versions, and little consensus. In preparing this article, I have selected routes that incorporate all the necessary locations, but by no means do I suggest that these routes represent the original road from San Diego to Sonoma. Even the branches from the main El Camino Real to the various missions have taken the name "El Camino Real."

The mode of transportation used was also a factor in the route taken. In what is now downtown Los Angeles, for instance, traders using pack trains or mules went by the Mission Road around the

EL CAMINO REAL

hills behind the little chapel near the present Plaza church. When they used wagons (circa 1860), they followed the Los Angeles River around the hills near the old lime kiln, a well known landmark.

Over the decades many things have changed in "Alta" California, the course of roads, locations of towns and even the specific (and subtle) use of the word "road." Until 1880, or even as late as 1900, road meant, "a trail that one used to walk or ride an animal on." A popular mode of transportation was the Mexican *carreta*, but the design of this cumbersome and lumbering vehicle precluded any long trips away from the ranchos or town.

By 1864 buggies and stagecoaches appeared, as did the term "wheeled road." This designated a road that could be used by these newer vehicles. By 1908 most of the main "wheeled roads" or "wagon roads" were firmly established, and the difference in names was dropped. These roads later served another emerging form of travel, the automobile.

Road maintenance in the period prior to state involvement was haphazard when done at all. Engineers were scarce and counties could not afford to pay premium wages. Unqualified people were often in charge, which resulted in disorganized and wasteful expenditures of public funds, and substandard work.³ By 1890 it seemed that California's roads were destined to disintegration. As a result, a movement came to the forefront which would not only affect El Camino Real but the entire State of California; this was the "Good Roads Movement."

EL CAMINO REAL

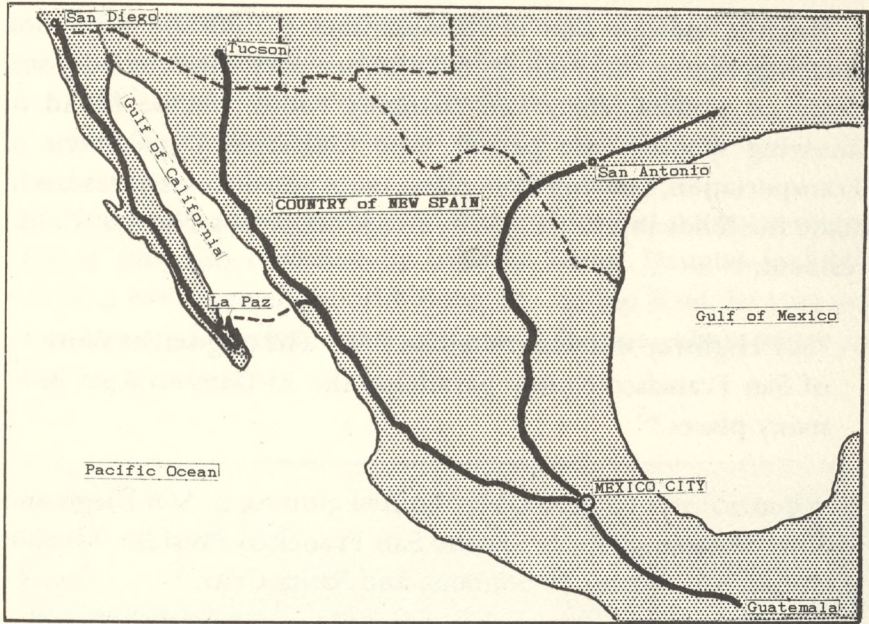


Figure 1. Courtesy the author

Roads improved as transportation requirements increased, and out of all of the early days of squabbling about potential routes, Highway 2 of California was built—it was named El Camino Real. Later this road was renumbered to Highway 101.

Prior to 1933, El Camino Real took many twists and turns, and was supported and financed by a score of funds. The lands it traversed were state, county, city, and privately owned. Improvements were hard to come by, and heated debates were common at Good Roads meetings. From 1947-1974, legislation was passed enabling the State Highway Commission to maintain and properly name the State road system.⁴

EL CAMINO REAL

Records indicate that at various times El Camino Real took differing routes, depending on weather and other conditions. Evidence of these early and changing routes can be found in surviving maps of the period. The California Department of Transportation, drawing from plans, maps and document research, made the following statement in a 1980 letter to a Novato (Calif.) resident:

"101 Highway was designated in 1909. The alignment south of San Francisco closely paralleled the El Camino Real in many places."⁵

Two general routes were taken, both beginning in San Diego and ending (including "splits") at the San Francisco Presidio, Mission San Francisco Solano de Sonoma, and Santa Cruz.

EL CAMINO REAL IN PROSE, POETRY, SONG AND SPECIMENS

During its history there have been stories, songs⁶ and poems written about this famous "King's Highway." One such accolade was penned by historian John S. McGroarty. This verse, written in 1904, begins:

*All in the golden weather, forth let us ride today,
You and I together on the King's Highway,
The blue skies above us, and below the shining sea,
There's many a road to travel, but it's this road for me.*

and continues in the same vein until the historic conclusion:

EL CAMINO REAL

*Old Conquistadores, O brown priests and all,
Give us your ghosts for company when night begins to fall,
There's many a road to travel, but it's this road today,
With the breath of God about us on the King's Highway.⁷*

Not only is this historic road remembered in poetry and song, but it was also recorded by botanist David Douglas in 1831.⁸ During his nineteen months along El Camino Real, he sent over five hundred species to the gardens of Europe, where many can still be seen today.



"Road maintenance...was haphazard, when done at all." Ventura in the early 1920s. *Courtesy California Department of Transportation*

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

ORIGINS: THE GOOD ROADS MOVEMENT AND THE LANDMARKS CLUB

THE CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION of California⁹ has been described as an outgrowth of the "Good Roads Movement." The primary objective of this movement was, ultimately, the development of a statewide, paved highway system in California.¹⁰ Although this movement would eventually have a daily impact on the lives of millions of California motorists, its origins can be found in the efforts of a group of bicyclists collectively known as the Century Club.¹¹

Founded in 1882, this Los Angeles club soon changed its name to the Los Angeles Wheelmen; its first president was "Col." James B. Lankershim. Organized for the purpose of holding bicycle races, the Club financed the construction (1899) of a "woodened-floored trestle from Los Angeles to Pasadena, the roadway to be ten feet wide...."¹² This roadway, much like the later Arroyo Seco Parkway (later still the Pasadena Freeway), followed the course of the Arroyo Seco from Pasadena, terminating at the Los Angeles Plaza. Although there were over 30,000 cyclists (more properly velocipede-bicyclists) in 1899, this early mode of transportation soon lost popularity as public interest moved from bicycle racing to automobile racing and, later, touring.¹³

Additional momentum came, temporarily, from the Landmarks Club, a society incorporated, "...to arouse interest in all quarters and to raise a permanent fund for the protection and conservation of the finest ruins in the United States."¹⁴ Founded in December 1895, the Club's objectives were, more specifically:

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

"To preserve from further decay and vandalism the old Missions of California; to assist in the restoration of such of the Mission buildings as may be found adaptable for uses in harmony with their original purposes; and to safeguard and conserve other historic monuments, relics and landmarks of the State."¹⁵

Charles Lummis, editor of the promotional magazine *Land of Sunshine* (later *Out West*) spearheaded this movement, but admitted that recognition for the first attempt to save the missions

"...belonged to Miss Tessa L. Kelso, who, in 1892, while head of the Los Angeles Public Library, was instrumental in organizing, along with the help of members of the Historical Society of Southern California, the Association for the Preservation of the Missions."¹⁶

Kelso soon left California for a job with the New York publishing house *Scribner's*, but not before she effectively joined the two organizations by turning over ninety dollars to the Landmarks Club, the amount the older association had raised. Miss Kelso's original impetus, albeit pure conjecture, has been traced to the "amazingly effective popularization of the mission era in Helen Hunt Jackson's *Ramona* (1882)."¹⁷

For a time the Landmarks Club identified itself with the growing movement to restore El Camino Real, but members were unable to agree upon a course of action—a major obstacle being whether the effort should be divided into northern and southern factions, with the Tehachapi Mountains as the dividing line—and,

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

although an accord was finally reached, the Landmarks Club "...severed any direct connection it might have had with the project of a King's Highway" after the formation of an official Camino Real Association.¹⁸

EARLY STATE INVOLVEMENT

Between 1867 and 1919 over a dozen California counties issued bonds to finance the improvement of public roads. Additionally, State bonds for specific road improvement projects were issued in 1910, 1916 and 1919. Other methods of funding included direct tax and the "pay as you go" theory."¹⁹

On March 27, 1895, the Bureau of Highways was created.²⁰ The Governor, Henry H. Markham, appointed three members to this bureau: R.C. Irvine, Sacramento; Marsden Manson, San Francisco; J.C. Maude, Riverside.²¹ The creation of this bureau seemed to provide the necessary impetus to the Good Roads Movement:

"As a result, no doubt of the activity of the Bureau of Highways the press throughout the State took up the agitation for better roads. The Los Angeles *Times* of Jan. 18, 1896 saying editorially: 'If the State were to build a few hundred miles of first class highway, the benefit would be so great and so apparent that the movement for good roads would be greatly accelerated and the people would cheerfully furnish the money necessary to continue the work until all the principal roads in the State were improved.'"²²

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

There was, however, at least one earlier meeting on the subject:

"These expressions of editorial opinion seem to indicate a widespread public interest in road improvement which, as a matter of fact, dated even farther back than 1895 for we find that a good roads convention was held in the Senate Chamber in Sacramento under the encouragement of Governor Markham in 1893, at which a highway system was discussed, but...no definite result."²³

The Bureau of Highways lasted only two years and was replaced, on April 1, 1897, by the Department of Highways. In 1907 the State Department of Engineering was created. On March 22, 1909, Governor James Gillett presented a bill that would establish a California Highway Commission; this bill was approved at the next general election in November 1910.²⁴ On July 1, 1919, a meeting of the newly-formed California Good Roads Campaign Committee was held. Influential representatives from every county were called to attend; the local representatives were C.D. Hubbard, Santa Barbara and Charles Donlon, Ventura. One predominate subject, of course, was money, and the attendees were encouraged to carry the campaign back to their respective counties. Although three statewide bond issues had been approved by the electorate by this time, each bond had passed by a slim margin and the movement was threatened by the "...meager plurality by which the bonds went through."²⁵

Interestingly, the first State bond issue, passed in 1910, offered a semblance of El Camino Real:

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

"Under the first bond issue a thick lane system was proposed with two main highways extending from Mexico to Oregon, one up through the great internal valleys which reach from north to south between the Coast Range mountains and the Sierra Nevadas; the other along the western slope of the Coast Range **in the main close to the ocean shore.**"²⁶

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

The first recorded mention of a plan to save El Camino Real of California came from a Miss Anna Pitcher (alternately spelled "Picher") of Pasadena about 1892.²⁷ Miss Pitcher, then director of the Pasadena Art Exhibition Association, contacted many organizations that might be interested in such a project.²⁸ And so it was, in May 1902, ninety years ago, that Miss Pitcher presented before the sixth Biennial Meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, in Los Angeles, her five point plan for the preservation of the road known as El Camino Real.²⁹ The elements of Miss Pitcher's plan were unanimously endorsed by the assembly:³⁰

1. Tracing the original Government Road of Spanish California from San Diego to San Francisco Solano through present succeeding counties and recording the history and traditions of this Road.
2. Proving the present adaptability of portions of the road for the purpose of a California State Highway, with the 21

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

Franciscan missions as both stations and landmarks upon it, one day's journey apart.³¹

3. Petitioning County Supervisors to assist the movement and to record the present road, where it exists, and its intersection with other roads and boulevards suitable for a State Highway.
4. Further petitioning Supervisors to unite in asking the State of California to survey the existing portions of this Camino Real and put mile-stones upon it which shall record its history.
5. Interesting residents and strangers in gradually making this road into a Memorial Highway, preserving its Spanish name, as well as making this route a "model" road meeting Government approval.

Attending this presentation were Mrs. A.C.S. Forbes, state chairman of the California History and Landmarks Department of the State Federation of Women's Clubs, and Mrs. Carolyn R. Olney (Mrs. Olney's position in the Federation is not known). Mrs. Forbes and her husband, Armitage, soon emerged as the driving force behind the entire effort.

One month later, in June 1902, this same plan was presented to the Grand Parlor of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, then in session at San Francisco.³² Miss Pitcher's statement was taken into consideration, but no resolution was acted upon until some years later.

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In late 1902 Miss Pitcher became seriously ill; more than a decade of dedicated work was in danger of being abandoned. On December 30, 1902, she sent a letter to Mrs. Bulkley, state president of the Federation of Women's Clubs, placing the continuation of the work with this organization, as can be seen in the following letter:

"Nothing would be quite so desirable as the presentation (at the State Convention) of the Camino Real by Mrs. Forbes. I would like the road plan taken up both as California History and Landmarks work. Let me say again how anxious I am to reach Oakland and the north for the Camino Real plan."³³

Mrs. Forbes, a very resourceful person, fully understood and could foresee the future impact of this plan. She accepted the challenge, and continued Anna Pitcher's crusade for this historic road and the proposed mile-stone markers. Mrs. Forbes was in an excellent position to assume this role, as she was a member of numerous service clubs and organizations, including the Friday Morning Club, the Southern California Women's Press Club, and the Ruskin Art Club. It is interesting to note that this last club met regularly in the drawing room of Miss Tessa Kelso's flat on Hill Street.³⁴ Although they were in constant contact with numerous Native Sons and Daughters groups, neither Mrs. Forbes (nee Harrie Rebbeca Piper Smith) nor her husband, Armitage Sutton Carion Forbes, were natives of California.³⁵

Mrs. Forbes and Mrs. Olney outlined a plan for the establishment of a statewide organization committed to the

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

restoration and marking of El Camino Real of California. Mrs. Olney, through contacts in Sacramento, was aware of pending legislation concerning the State Road Bills movement in the California Department of Transportation, and State Public Works Department.

Almost immediately the idea of a statewide organization was met with opposition from certain members of the History and Landmarks Department of the Federation of Women's Clubs, who felt this plan should be under their direction. Some members wanted to improve only that part of El Camino Real which was south of the Tehachapi Mountains. They also opposed state aid in the construction of the road. The political maneuvering within the organization threatened to divide the Federation.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Forbes and Mrs. Olney continued to base the project on the original plan, which included state aid and entailed the research and restoration of the entire length of the road that once connected the historic California missions from San Diego to Sonoma. The route was to be marked with signposts identifying it as El Camino Real. By the time they presented this plan to the History and Landmarks Department, they had gained the support of a majority of the Women's Clubs, Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West, as well as automobile clubs, good roads clubs and historical societies. They appealed to all broad-minded, future-thinking individuals for support. Their persistence was rewarded, but not without a struggle.

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

THE LOS ANGELES CONVENTION

During the early part of the century, the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce aggressively promoted the mutually beneficial causes of local business and good roads. Through the Chamber's contact with the Landmarks Club, a meeting was called on Saturday, January 30, 1904, to consider the project of Miss Pitcher's five point plan.³⁶ It was summarized as:

- a) Constructing and marking a great thoroughfare to follow the line of the ancient Camino Real from San Diego to Santa Barbara.
- b) Asking the northern counties to cooperate and undertake the road from Santa Barbara northward.³⁷

And was further described,

"The great modern highway along the historic line will be for automobilists, bicyclists, and tallyhos, indeed-but it will also be for the farmers, who amount to a good deal more; for the quiet drivers, for the people that can sit on a horse without falling off, for people who still have joy of walking....It will even be for our tourists; and while we sometimes detect in them certain lapses from wisdom, few of them are such fools as to wish to snort up the pike at sixty miles an hour and never see the missions or the country."³⁸

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

Invitations to the January gathering went out to other Chambers of Commerce, Native Sons and Daughters groups, county supervisors, historical societies, women's clubs, automobile clubs and many commercial organizations. It has been frequently written that all eighty invited delegates were present.³⁹

The political maneuvering and back room politics that occurred at this Los Angeles meeting prompted a frustrated Charles Lummis to report:

"For the Convention did not consider at all the things for which it was called. The lady from Sacramento [Oakland] had been busy. By circulating the foolish falsehood that the Camino Real plan was a masked move for State Division, she excited the Sons and Native Daughters - two patriotic organizations which stand for 'California one and indivisible,' as do we all....But these organizations were imposed upon by this childish story; their delegates controlled the convention; and the delegates had their instructions. It was an entirely innocent act on the part of the California-born Americans, many of whom are now raging at the knowledge of the deceit that was practiced upon them, and the position in which this place-hunter put the two orders as apparently ignorant and careless of the history of the State they love."⁴⁰

As a result of the January 30 meeting, two resolutions were voted upon: First, that a committee of fifteen persons was to be appointed to make the necessary arrangements and to draft a call for a convention to organize a permanent statewide Camino Real

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

Association. The fifteen individuals charged with the job of putting together this most important of organizational meetings were: Dr. Milbank Johnson, president, Automobile Club of Southern California; Walter R. Bacon, president, Historical Society of Southern California; Henry E. Carter, Native Sons of the Golden West; Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes, chairman, California History and Landmarks Department; E.T. Earl, Driving Club; Dr. O.S. Barnum, League of American Wheelmen; A.B. Cass, Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce; C.M. Gidney, secretary, Santa Barbara Chamber of Commerce; H.P. Wood, secretary, San Diego Chamber of Commerce; Frank Ey, member City Council, Santa Ana; Gail Borden, Alhambra; Benjamin W. Hahn, Pasadena; Judge R.S. [C.?] Blackstock, Ventura; W.M. Peck, Riverside; Stephen V. Kelly, San Bernardino.⁴¹

The second resolution (according to Charles Lummis) called for a Camino Real "coterminous with the limits of the State"⁴² Recalled Lummis:

"The convention voted to disregard the road where it did run, and run it 400 miles where it never dreamed of going, and to laugh at history and at the very romance which is the chief asset of California. There was even one gentleman who assured the convention "that there never was a Camino Real in California...."

Lummis was also outspoken about the outcome of this meeting,

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"...Make California responsible of her gross ignorance of her own history and a perfect willingness to fake anything...."⁴³

In January 1904 the idea of a state-long road called El Camino Real received some personal support from a group of San Francisco millionaires.⁴⁴ Exactly what these men did toward the development and improvement of El Camino Real has never been established.

The arrangements, planning, and call for a second convention was completed and the date set as April 19-20, 1904; the location was to be Santa Barbara. Delegates from each part of the State through which El Camino Real passed, including many organizations, clubs and leading newspapers, were invited to attend.

THE SANTA BARBARA CONVENTION

According to reports, there were over ninety people representing 26 cities. Ventura County was represented by: Mrs. M.E. Dudley, California Federation of Women's Clubs; Mrs. Orpha Foster, president, County Association of Women's Clubs; T.G. Gabbert, chairman, County Board of Supervisors; Mrs. B.T. Williams, Native Daughters Improvement Society (a complete list of the cities and representatives attending this convention is available at the VCMHA Library). Most of the representatives were from south of the San Luis Obispo County line, giving the South an advantage in voting. Concern about this inequity was expressed by the northern delegation. But as the meeting progressed, every

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

one seemed to be in harmony, and a statewide organization was formed—The Camino Real Association.

To get this new organization into action, an executive committee of eighteen delegates was elected and given the power to elect a president, eight vice-presidents, treasurer, secretary and two auditors.⁴⁵ Mr. A.P. Flemming was the first president, the secretary was Mrs. Caroline R. Olney, Mrs. Forbes served as one of the auditors. One of the first responsibilities of the secretary was to organize the sections in the various counties through which El Camino Real passed.

A Road Committee was appointed to study the old roads in Los Angeles and Orange counties, and to report to the State Executive Committee. In 1905 the report was given: "[The] Los Angeles section had an abstract and map of all old roads in Los Angeles and Orange counties made for us by the Title Indemnity and Trust Company...."⁴⁶ A year later, the road investigation was expanded from Los Angeles to Sonoma.

Road routes were verified from a variety of sources: church records, diseños of ranchos, and invaluable information furnished by old Spanish families and pioneers. It has been claimed that there was not one mile of the old road that was not investigated by the Camino Real Association.⁴⁷

Now that the route was being confirmed, the Camino Real Association turned to the markers that were to be erected along this road. At once there were problems, what kind of markers were

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

to be erected? and how were they to be erected? The locations were to be established as needed.

The method by which Mrs. Forbes and Mrs. Gates developed the symbolic marker(s) for El Camino Real is unclear. We do know that the plan called for the erection of these markers along the length of California. The Camino Real Association appointed Mrs. Forbes chairman of the newly-created Bell Committee in 1906. This committee was to procure and oversee the erection of El Camino Real bell signposts, for city, county and state roads that were, subsequently, to be officially recognized as being part of El Camino Real.

Mr. Flemming remained president of the Camino Real Association until about 1910. In 1911 Mrs. Forbes was elected president of the Los Angeles Section of the Camino Real Association. She proceeded to reorganize the Association in three areas: to eliminate the Section work (most of the bell erections were being accomplished by the Los Angeles Section anyway; now all such activity would emanate from Los Angeles); to reduce the dues from two dollars per year to one dollar; to change the name to El Camino Real Association of California. Mrs. Forbes later declined re-election and was succeeded by her husband; how long he served as president is unknown.

CALIFORNIA BELL COMPANY

In 1914, while Mrs. Forbes was serving as Association president, the Forbes' went into the souvenir and novelty business, offering a variety of bells to the general public.⁴⁸ Whether or not Mrs.

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Forbes actually cast the original El Camino Real bells cannot be verified, but there is evidence that Mrs. Forbes did manage a foundry that made bells.⁴⁹ Between 1914 and 1928, these two businesses occupied four different locations, two in Los Angeles, one in La Canada and another in Alhambra.⁵⁰

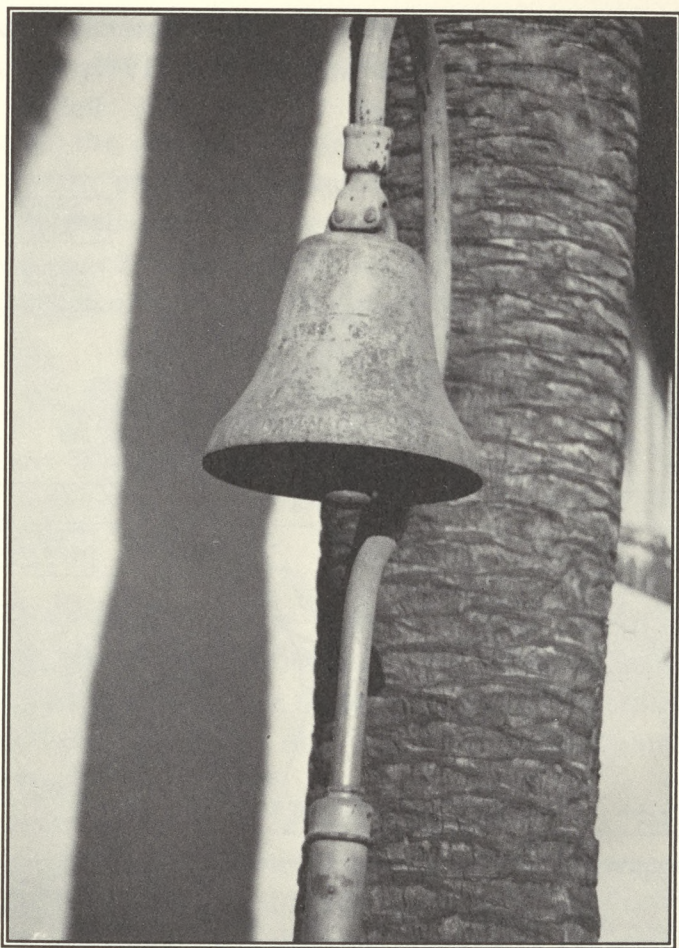
In 1928 Mr. Forbes passed away, and Mrs. Forbes carried on the novelty company and foundry until 1948, at which time she sold the foundry.⁵¹ Mrs. Forbes died in 1951, ending an Association era that was responsible for the designation, preservation and marking of El Camino Real of California.

MAINTENANCE OF THE BELLS

About 1921 the Camino Real Association made appeals to the Automobile Club of Southern California and to the California State Automobile Association for the maintenance of El Camino Real bells. When the bells were first erected there was no provision for their maintenance, and since the bells and supports were not painted, they soon became quite unsightly. The only exception was the bell and standard placed in front of the Plaza Church (1906), which had been painted. Assuming this responsibility, the two Automobile Clubs provided regular maintenance of these bells, probably in conjunction with the maintenance of the signs on the bell posts, painting them the familiar green color we see today.

These signs played a vital role in directing California motorists in the early part of the century.⁵² We must remember that no one map existed for the entire length of El Camino Real until

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

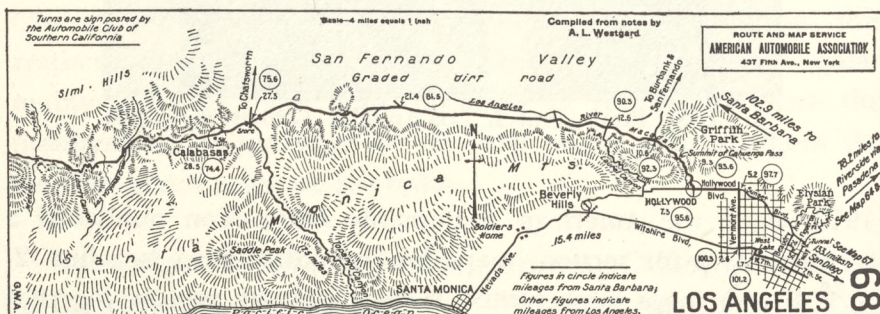
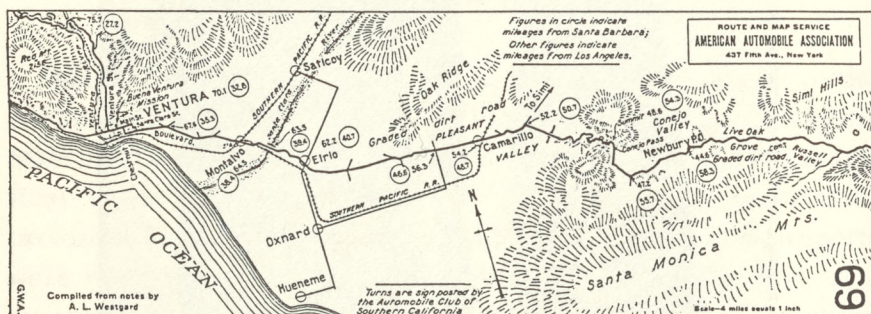
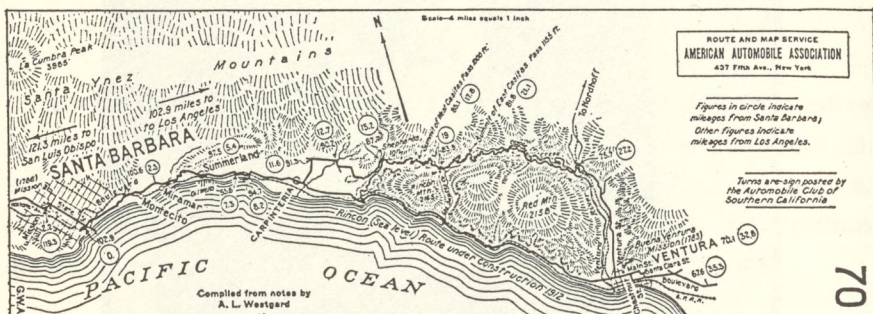


The first: Plaza Church, Los Angeles. *Courtesy the author*

1912, when the American Automobile Association published a series of strip (or section) maps for the entire road (see figs. 2-4).⁵³ These maps represented a monumental project for that time, and mark the beginning of the AAA map service to the

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California motorist. The Automobile Clubs continued maintenance of the bells and of the signs until January 1947, when those responsibilities were assumed by the State Public Works Department.⁵⁴



Figures 2-4. Strip maps published by the American Automobile Association, 1912.

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DECLINE OF THE BELLS, PUBLIC INDIFFERENCE AND THE REBIRTH OF THE ASSOCIATION

Between the years of 1930-1956, the population of California grew steadily, placing increased demands on the existing road system. As roads were widened and even relocated, El Camino Real bells were removed and not reinstalled. Theft and vandalism also contributed to the decreasing number of bells.⁵⁵

Likewise, as the city of Ventura expanded, many of the bells were uprooted and lost forever. As historian E.M. Sheridan remembers, a bell located at five points was taken to the court house basement and stored for years, with no record of its ever being used.⁵⁶

The most startling event, however, was the 1957 California State Legislature's blunder of the decade: the renaming of El Camino Real — a "legislative fluke" that sparked the rebirth of an El Camino Real lobby, this time known as the Committee for El Camino Real.

In June 1958, Mrs. Eileen Dismuke of Santa Barbara, while on an official visit to parlors of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, was shocked to find signs on the historic El Camino Real showing the name "Cabrillo Highway."⁵⁷ With due concern she made inquiries, organized the Committee for El Camino Real in December 1958, and with the help of sympathetic organizations, historical societies, and thousands of dedicated people throughout the state, sponsored Senator J.J. Hollister's bill to rescind the name "Cabrillo Highway."⁵⁸ The Committee for El Camino Real

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purchased roadside bells as needed until funds ran out, then made an appeal to then Governor Ronald Reagan to expand the bell maintenance bill to include the procurement and installation, and to make these bells official state property. Replacement "facsimile" bells were ordered from one Justin Kramer of Los Angeles, who provided the bells at a cost of \$25.00 each—the same price paid for the original bells in 1906.⁵⁹

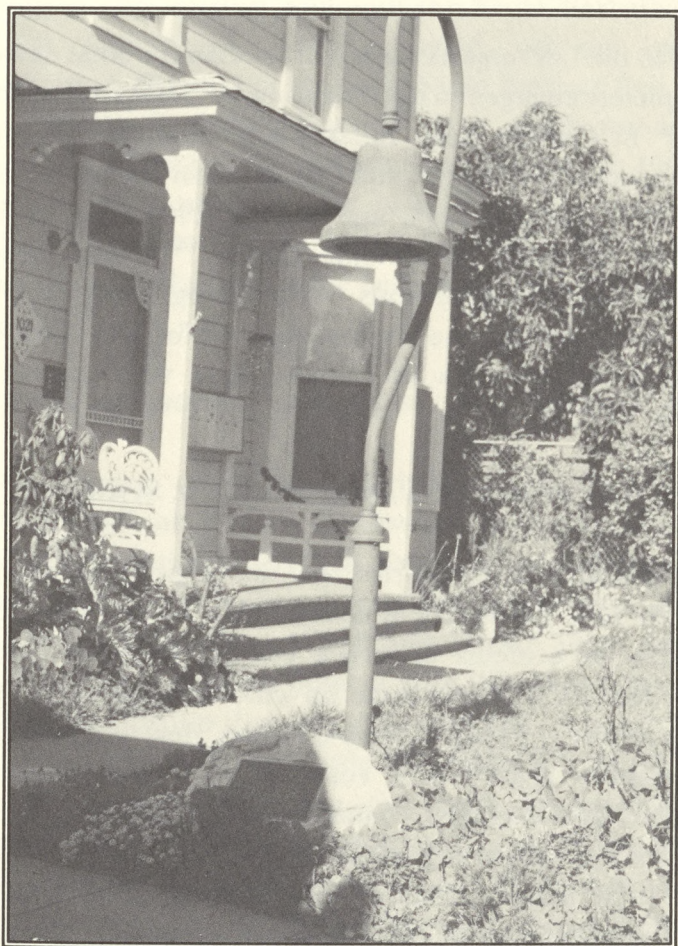
The Committee for El Camino Real, like the Camino Real Association, no longer exists, having (for the present) fulfilled its purpose. Only long and dedicated work, primarily by women, made these organizations possible. Charles Lummis (not without a certain amount of tongue-in-cheek) recognized their contribution:

"And there are the Women's Clubs—a truly remarkable host in Southern California; remarkable not only for number, not only for membership, but perhaps most of all for vitality. There is no hazard in remarking that any one of the most prominent of these Women's Clubs in this region is doing more to keep alive the flame of intellectuality than all the men's clubs put together. That is doubtless a truism for the whole country. Of course Men could Do It Better—but we Haven't Time."⁶⁰

In 1986 a bell was placed in front of the Santa Barbara home of Eileen Dismuke, a past grand president of the Native Daughters of the Golden West. A bronze plaque at the base of the bell reads:

EL CAMINO REAL ASSOCIATION

In Memory of Eileen Galvin Dismuke
Past Grand President
Whose Love for Her State
And El Camino Real Project
Will Never Be Forgotten



Memorial Camino Real bell at the Santa Barbara home of Eileen Dismuke. *Courtesy the author*

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

AT THE APRIL 1904 meeting of the Camino Real Association in Santa Barbara, the newly-selected executive board charged the Los Angeles Section with two distinct assignments: to investigate the route of El Camino Real, and to provide a distinctive, emblematic and appropriate guide-post along this route.⁶¹

By 1905 the Los Angeles section of the Camino Real Association was completely engaged in documenting, as closely as possible, the "original" El Camino Real. Initially only that part of the road passing through Los Angeles and Orange counties was researched. In the latter part of 1905, and during 1906, the "road" was verified as far north as Sonoma County.⁶² During this time discussions and disagreements were taking place within the Association concerning the original goals set forth in 1893. One of these goals was to mark El Camino Real with some type of landmark.

THE SEARCH FOR AN APPROPRIATE SYMBOL

Some accounts have reported that the original bell design was created by Mrs. Forbes for a contest held by the Camino Real Association. No evidence of such a "contest" has been found. We do know that a C.F. Gates came up with the suggestion of a bell and, apparently working with Mrs. Forbes, developed the symbol for this historic road.⁶³ Mrs. Forbes brought the design before the Camino Real executive committee and her drawings for both the bell and the supporting standard were accepted. Although the original bells plainly display "copyright by 1906 Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes," no evidence of this copyright has been located.⁶⁴ A patent search of the *Official Gazette* for the years 1902-1910 was

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

made, and the only patent issued to the Forbes' was a still to which Mr. Forbes claimed only fractional ownership; this patent was dated July 14, 1902.⁶⁵

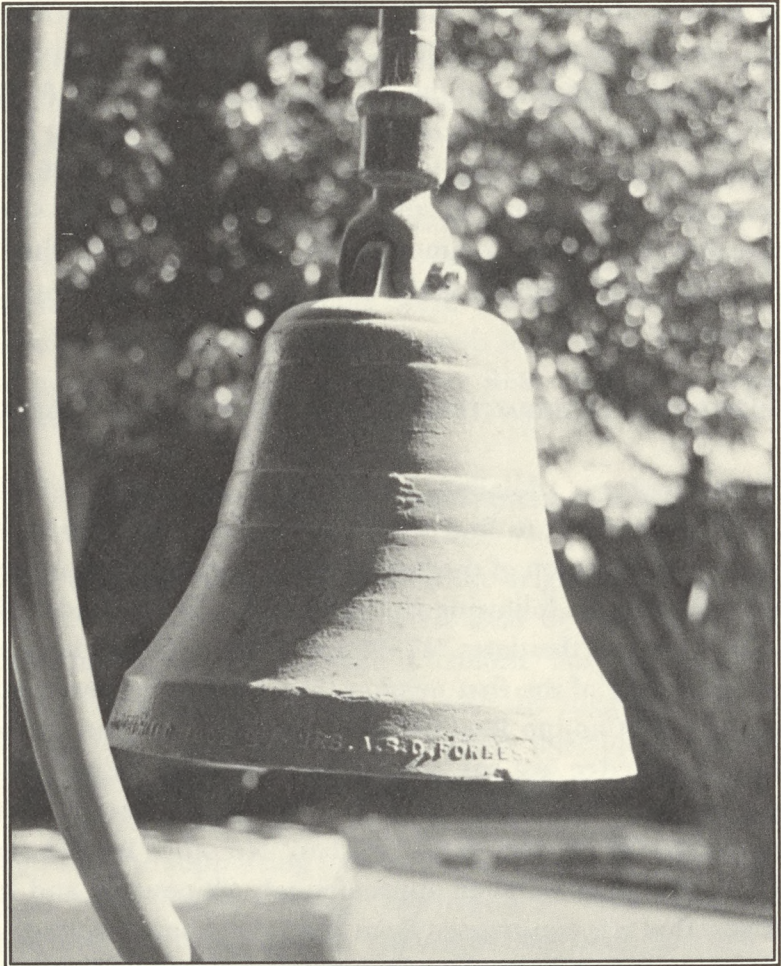
The origin of the pattern used in the creation of the Camino Real bells is also unclear, although the *Santa Barbara Morning Press* for August 14, 1906, claimed, without proof or documentation, "Replica of the Early Santa Barbara Bell Adopted by the Camino Real Association."⁶⁶ It is worth noting that a measurement of the bells at Mission Santa Barbara in 1906 would have shown that none of the bells were the same size or proportion. It is also a common belief that Mrs. Forbes finalized her sketches while looking at the bells in the Old Plaza Church in Los Angeles.

IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE "ORIGINAL" BELLS

Contemporary, detailed descriptions of the bells are exceedingly difficult to find. Observers, apparently, never really made a full inspection of the bells. From a survey of the surviving "original" bells, the following characteristics have been identified. On the front are the dates "1769" and "1906." These dates refer to the founding of the first mission (San Diego) and the erection of the first El Camino Real bell (Los Angeles). Around the bell's bottom front edge are the words "EL CAMINO REAL." If one looks on the back side, one can read, in smaller letters, "Copyright 1906 by Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes." No other lettering is on the bell. Each bell weighed approximately 92 pounds, and hung on a post that was constructed from bent 1½" diameter piping that fitted into a larger base pipe mounted in concrete. The post was

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

eleven feet in height and could easily be seen by a passing traveler. Some posts displayed a brass plate with the donor's name and date. Today, 88 years later, some of these plates can still be seen at various locations.



"Original" bell, back side. *Courtesy the author*

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

As noted, the bell posts served a dual purpose, that of suspending the bell of the historic El Camino Real, while also displaying a sign providing travelers with directions and distances.⁶⁷ Each element of the assembly is symbolic. The pipe stand was called a "Jamie," named after the first martyred Franciscan friar, Fr. Luis Jayme (d. San Diego, November 4, 1775).⁶⁸ and represents the simple, austere life led by these men of God. Iron was selected for the material from which to construct the bells to represent the iron will of the men who made this first California road. The bell was chosen as an appropriate marker to call people's attention (as the padres signaled others with the ringing of a bell) to the historic meaning of the road. The "original" bells did have a clapper and could be rung.⁶⁹ The sound the bell emitted was not a clear ring because of the material used; it was not made for ringing.

THE BELLS BECOME A REALITY: PLACEMENT & DISTRIBUTION

On August 15, 1906, the first of a series of bells was erected at the Plaza Church in downtown Los Angeles.⁷⁰ This bell is the "original" type, complete with clapper, and is the standard against which all others are compared.⁷¹

The second bell to be erected was located at Mission San Diego. After this, bells began to appear throughout Southern California. By 1910 fifty-four bells had been erected south of the Santa Barbara County line; the work was then extended northward.⁷²

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

Mrs. Forbes recalled that during her time as president of the El Camino Real Association, the following number of bells were erected: in 1910, 121, in 1911, at least 300 bells.⁷³ A sense of the patterns of bell distribution can be gleaned from a letter, dated May 15, 1914, from El Camino Real Association of California:

"...request made by Mr. Forbes for three bells from the Chamber of Commerce of Santa Barbara and the location of same. We wish the bells to be placed...at E. Boulevard & State St. and Hollister Ave....the other about a mile to the south-east on the corner of Boulevard & State St....

"Mr. Forbes leaves in a day or two to oversee the erection of 19 bells for the city of San Diego, that will make 75 Bells for San Diego County and City....

"...Santa Barbara County and for Ventura the Supervisors have agreed to order 35 or 40 Bells after June 1st. which is the end of the fiscal year....

"The Bell for Mission Santa Ines...changed it to a steel Bell...we now are trying to place only steel Bells at the Missions, they are sweet toned, but too expensive to be placed along the road.

"It will take 50 bells for Santa Barbara Co. 3 for the city and this will make a continuous chain of almost a Bell a mile from Mission San Diego to the northern County line of Santa Barbara."⁷⁴

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

The concept of one bell for each mile was more an ideal than a reality. According to 1912 road maps, the distance from Mission San Diego to Santa Barbara City was 236 miles, the total distance from San Diego to San Francisco was 603.7 miles (not including the unrecorded mileage to Sonoma, which was approximately 50 miles).⁷⁵

El Camino Real bells could not be located randomly along the roadside. In some locations, such as Los Angeles, a permit was required. On February 11, 1914, Mrs. Forbes was granted "Permit #9" from the California Highway Commission to "erect Mission Bell guide posts,"⁷⁶ beginning at a point 14 miles from Los Angeles Plaza, and ending at the Ventura County line. It is not known if these specific bells were ever erected.

How many bells were there? The following El Camino Real bell locations are taken from *California Missions and Landmarks*, by Mrs. A.C.S. Forbes (1925).⁷⁷ By 1911 the following bells were claimed to have been installed:

San Diego County	75	Los Angeles County	110
Orange County	28	San Francisco City	10
San Mateo County	25	Alameda County	23
Ventura County	14	San Bernardino County	18

In a letter written to Charles Lummis in 1910, Mrs. Forbes stated that 114 bells had been erected along El Camino Real.⁷⁸ She noted elsewhere, "Since 1911, 300 bells have been added bringing the total to 450 bells."⁷⁹ An El Camino Real Association report dated December 31, 1910, provides a breakdown of counties and

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

cities having erected El Camino Real bells (a complete list of these cities is available at the VCMHA Library).

There are no El Camino Real bells on sections of El Camino Real owned by the Federal Government, presumably because the bell signs do not conform to federal highway standards for signage.

OTHER LOCATIONS

Placement of the bells has not been limited entirely to El Camino Real, or even California. In 1963 Mr. And Mrs. George Whitney of Upland purchased a Justin Kramer bell, which they presented to the museum at the birthplace of Junipero Serra, Petra, in Majorca, Spain.⁸⁰ The United California Bank purchased 32 bells which were erected at each of its Southern California branches. In 1991 The Native Daughters of the Golden West presented a bell to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania.

SUBSEQUENT GENERATIONS OF EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

In a 1940 catalog, the Forbes' California Bell Company offered the following:

"...authentic reproductions made world famous by Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes...now made exclusively by the California Bell Company. For over thirty years, reproductions of early California mission bells have been Souvenir and Collectors items."⁸¹

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

The last mention of this company is found in a 1948 letter from the California Mission Trails Association stating that Mrs. Forbes had sold the company and patents for several bell designs in 1946.⁸² As noted, Mrs. Forbes died in 1951.

VARIANTS OF THE "ORIGINAL" DESIGN

Two variants of Mrs. Forbes' original design were also produced: a "second generation" type similar to the "original" but lacking the copyright statement, Mrs. Forbes' name and a clapper (see fig. 5); a "Landmarks" bell with the word "LANDMARK" replacing the dates "1769" and "1906."

JUSTIN KRAMER BELL

The next type of bell was produced by Justin Kramer of Los Angeles, who, during the early 1960s, produced approximately 300s bell for El Camino Real. These bells can be identified by the absence of bands around the base, and are also lacking a copyright statement. Mr. Kramer was still casting the same bell, by appointment, in 1991 (see fig. 6). *Dimensions: 17½" h., 15" dia.*

DOUBLE-DATED BELL

This bell was a California Department of Transportation procurement about which little is known. The dates "1769" and "1906" are displayed on both sides. *Dimensions: 17¾" h., 15" dia.*

EL CAMINO REAL BELLS

STATE OF CALIFORNIA BELLS

On September 17, 1974, the California Department of Transportation contracted for 50 bells of this design, which features a flat top and the words "PROPERTY OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA" across the top. *Dimensions: 17½" h., 15" dia.*

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION BELLS

This bell, first produced in 1978, is made of cast concrete, and is made by various Caltrans maintenance offices throughout California. *Dimensions: 14¾" h., 17" dia.* Presently, damaged and missing bells are replaced with this type of bell.

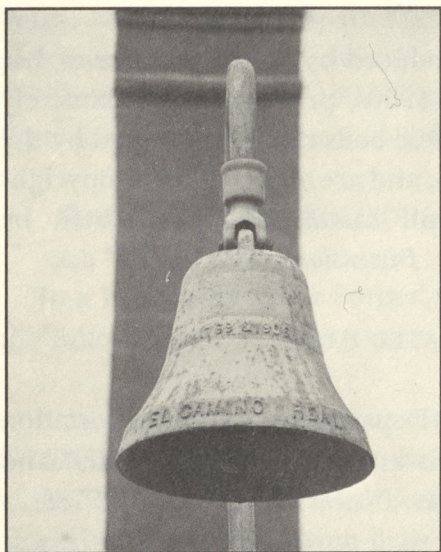


Figure 5. "Second" generation bell.
Courtesy the author



Figure 6. Justin Kramer bell.
Courtesy the author

EL CAMINO REAL and the BELLS of VENTURA COUNTY

From the first published map of "California's El Camino Real for the motorist and traveler," published by the American Automobile Association in 1912,⁸³ we find that El Camino Real followed old Ventura Boulevard, in Los Angeles County, to about Topanga Canyon, where the macadam surfacing ended and the graded dirt road began. The road then traveled through Calabasas and on to Ventura County. The graded dirt road passed by the Newbury Park post office and, three miles farther, turned right to the approach of the Conejo (Spanish for rabbit) Pass, winding down its switchbacks and with little more than one lane. The road then crossed the Southern Pacific rails and passed through Camarillo and El Rio, then crossed the Santa Clara River and continued on Conejo Road (now Ventura Boulevard) into the town of San Buenaventura.

During the 1800s the Camino Real left Mission San Buenaventura, turned to the right and followed Cañada Street (now Ventura Avenue) staying on the east side of the river. Just above where Coyote Creek comes into the Ventura River, there was a crossing. From this crossing a graded dirt road climbed uphill to about 1155 feet. This was the East Casitas Pass, from there the road dropped to 1000 feet at the West Casitas Pass, and continued on about four miles to Shepard's Inn, where it entered Santa Barbara County. The entire road through Ventura County was a graded dirt road until about 1912. In the early and mid 1800s this "road" was nothing but a wide horse and walking trail. Only after the advent of buggies, stagecoaches and automobiles was the road widened and graded.

THE BELLS of VENTURA COUNTY



Summit, Casitas Pass. *Courtesy Automobile Club of Southern California*

FROM CASITAS PASS TO THE RINCON

Prior to 1910, conditions on the Casitas Pass during any type of rain were easily reduced to a muddy quagmire.⁸⁴ As the *Ventura Democrat* stated in 1907:

"The cities are not connected now by any thing that we may call a road. The old Casitas grade is a wreck and something must be done to make travel between the two cities possible."⁸⁵

THE BELLS of VENTURA COUNTY



Shepard's Inn, Casitas Pass Road

Reports of this type, understandably, discouraged many travelers from using that road. The historical alternative, beach travel for stage and wagon, continued. The beach route had been used from the time of the missions, but there were also drawbacks to this route. Passage was restricted to low tide and during daylight hours. The constantly moving rocks and wet sand made the beach route almost as treacherous as the mud of the Casitas Camino Real. As more people moved into Ventura County and the demands on roads increased, the idea of building a road around and near the place called "Rincon" gained momentum. To build such a road, however, would cost a huge sum of money.

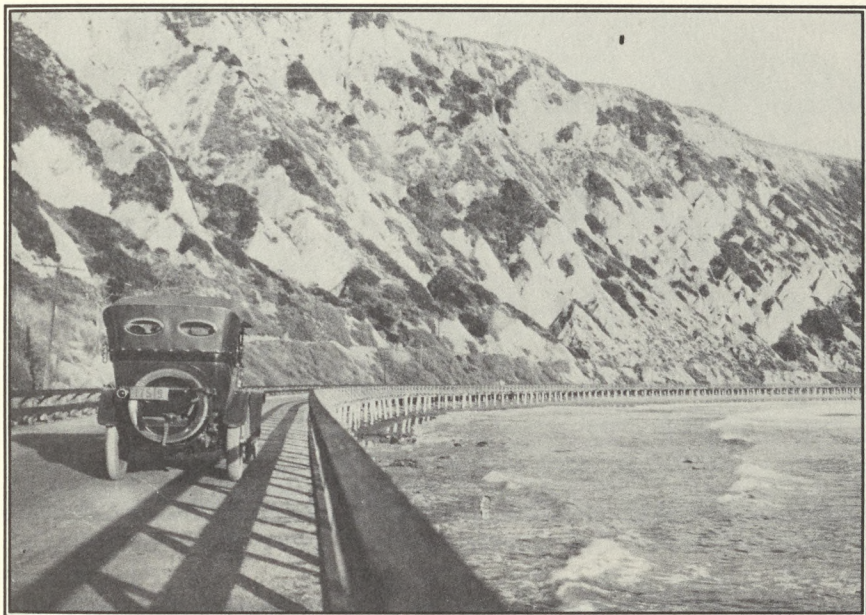
The Camino Real Association was the leading fund raiser for this Ventura County project—a project that would benefit the

THE BELLS of VENTURA COUNTY

entire state. The Association raised funds from private donations, from the sale of souvenir El Camino Real bells and from the proceeds of the world famous play *Ramona*, presented at the Mason Opera House in Los Angeles on February 27-28 and March 1, 1905.⁸⁶ The dramatization was written by Johnstone Jones and Virginia Calhoun, who played the title role. Her Alessandro, incidentally, was D.W. Griffith, who later produced the first motion picture version of *Ramona* (filmed in Ventura County in 1910).

Funds came from many other sources. In 1911 the Camino Real Association presented a benefit for the Rincon Road.⁸⁷ This benefit, given by the Stock Company, featured Mr. Nat C. Goodwin and Miss Marjorie Rambeau in "The Gilded Fool," on August 28-29, 1911. The slogan for the event was "Casitas Pass Overcome--Help hang the bell--Rincon--Sea level road." Many workmen donated their time to build a wooden road along the Rincon.⁸⁸ This unique elevated wooden road or "causeway" ran along a section of some of the most beautiful coast in California. It also had problems. During heavy surf and very high tides, the supports for this wooden road were washed out and automobiles had to make it on their own through the muddy strip and wet sand. But in good weather automobiles could travel from Ventura to Santa Barbara in about 1½ hours. The boards were rough and noisy but nothing compared to the stagecoach ride in Ventura County. There are accounts of stage luggage being swept away while crossing the rivers in Ventura County, and of people being rescued by passing horsemen.

THE BELLS of VENTURA COUNTY



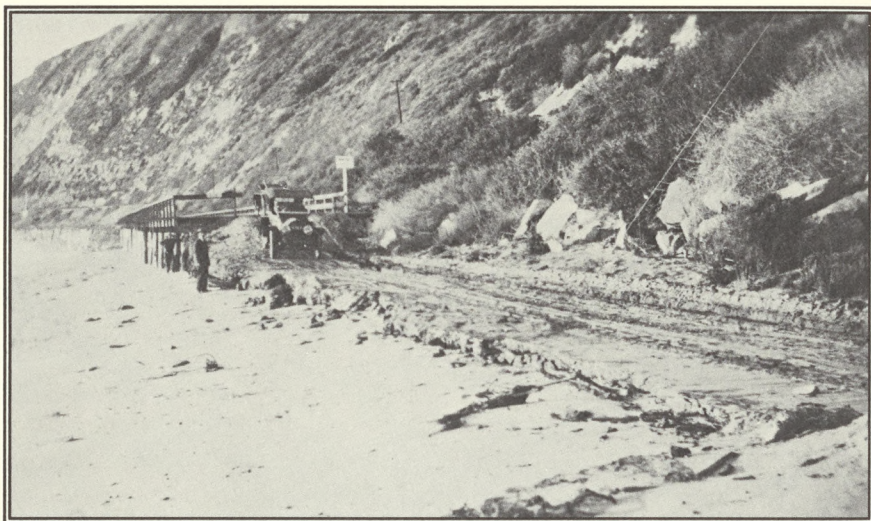
The new causeway...

It would not be until December 21, 1972, that the Rincon route (7.9 miles in length) would be formally dedicated as part of Highway 101, and incorporated as a section of historic El Camino Real.⁸⁹ The Camino Real Association made provisions to mark this new section with approximately 20 bells.

OFFICIAL AND LOCAL RECOGNITION

On December 3, 1903, a committee composed of Mrs. B.T. Williams, Mrs. W.H. Layne, Mrs. H.F. Clark, Mrs. L.B. Hogue, Mrs. J.B. Wagner, Mrs. J.A. Walker, Mrs. J.B. Alvord, Mrs. D.S. Blackburn, and Mrs. M.E. Dudley appeared before the Board of Supervisors of Ventura County urging that board to establish and recognize the "El Camino Real."⁹⁰ The very next day,

THE BELLS of VENTURA COUNTY



...also had its problems. *Courtesy California Department of Transportation*

December 4, 1903, the County of Ventura had its first Highway Commission, composed of 51 people representing a stable cross section of business, labor, farmers and inspired citizens.⁹¹

Of the many dedicated organizations involved in local and state history, the Landmarks Club of California stands out as one of the leading associations. This club pushed for the recognition of California's history and for the establishment of landmarks of which Ventura County could be justifiably proud. The Club's relentless leader was none other than Charles Lummis. On June 22, 1904, Lummis wrote (partly in Spanish) in his diary, "voy a Plaza I, meeting plan committee Camino Real Assn. Borden, Arnott, Mrs. Olney, Flemming."⁹²

THE BELLS of VENTURA COUNTY

On June 25, 1904, Charles Lummis came to Ventura City and spoke at the Opera House in an effort to organize a committee to take an active interest in Ventura County and effect a permanent El Camino Real Organization.⁹³ The following names appeared in the *Republican* on Thursday June 15, 1904, as being "selected" by Lummis:

Hon. Marion Cannon	Mrs. M.E. Dudley
Mrs. D.S. Blackburn	Hon. T.G. Gabbert
Miss Seymore (of Briggs)	Mrs. Alice McKeveit
Mrs. John B. Wagner	Mrs. Harriet A. Berry
Mrs. T.R. Bard	Mrs. W. H. Lane
Mr. Albert Maulhardt	Hon. H. Warring
Hon. D.T. Perkins	Mrs. B.T. Williams
Mrs. Ella C. Orr	Mrs. John A. Walker
Mrs. E.P. Foster	

These individuals, it is to be assumed, were the people that made up the Ventura County Section of the Camino Real Association.

A January 28, 1904 article in the *Democrat* alerted readers to an upcoming Chamber of Commerce meeting in Los Angeles to "...form a plan for the construction of the El Camino Real,...it is to be hoped that Ventura county will be represented."⁹⁴ On March 30, 1904, the same newspaper informed readers of the Santa Barbara meeting to plan for the construction of El Camino Real.⁹⁵ Ventura was well represented during the organizational meeting in Santa Barbara in April 1904. Attendees included: Mrs. M.E. Dudley, California Federation of Women's Clubs; Mrs. Orpha W. Foster, president, County Association of Women's Clubs;

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T.G. Gabbert, chairman, county Board of Supervisors; Mrs. B.T. Williams, Native Daughters Improvement Society.⁹⁶

In January 1904 the *Democrat* assured the people of Ventura County that:

"There is no doubt that Ventura will do her part to further the plan, as the line traces the very center of the most populous section of the county, and it is not necessary to describe in words what that means to the people thus benefitted. Camino Real would be the greatest advertisement the whole state could have, as it would become known and be discussed in every civilized country on the globe."⁹⁷

On June 23, 1904, Mrs. M.E. Dudley wrote a poem about El Camino Real entitled "Uncle Nathan Talks about the Camino Real":

*"T've heard they think to build a road in California State,
To run the whole blame length of it, for passengers and freight,
That's why their holdin' all around, conventions, where folks show,
How much they need the plaguey thing, and try to make it go.*

*Now this Camino Real has a master name I think,
It's one o' them the Padres gave and takes a sight o' ink,
But if they'd call it just plain "road" it wouldn't do I hear,
For folks are great on sentiment and want the title clear.*

I hope they'll hustle matters up, and when it's done, some day,

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*I guess I'll take a little ride with Ma, behind Old Grey.
The trees and flow'rs and shrubs and things, Will be a purty sight,
Au-tom-obiles, and kerrages will each have room to light.*

*For they intend to make it broad as well as long they say,
'Twill be so mighty splendid now a reg'lar King's Highway,
I wonder what the Padres thin who first this road surveyed,
To seek the pesky Protestants a takin of their grade.*

*I've always been a hearin since I was 'bout knee-high, that Catholics and
Protestants dont mingle in the sky,
But times out here are changin' and thoughts and roads grow broad,
Because the folks that's livin' now all worship the same God.*

*I hope they'll raise th money and start the thing all right,
I'll give a shillin' towards it if fee-nances are tight,
Fer Ma and me 'way down in Main have made a little "pile,"
And we ain't no ways graspin' but like the Western style.*

*Of startin' into things that's big and carryin' of em through,
And git the whole blame busines done, while we could set a screw,
Here's fer Camino Real, I'll wish her well agin,
Whoever pays and prays fer her, I'll allus say--Amen!"⁹⁸*

On December 7, 1906, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors agreed to install ten El Camino Real bells at selected locations. The Supervisors would buy three, the other seven to be purchased by others.⁹⁹ By the time the bells were purchased and arrangements were made for installation, it was February 1907. At

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the February 12, 1907 meeting of the Ventura Board of Supervisors, the County Surveyor was instructed:

"...to place on the map heretofore made designation the places at which El Camino Real Bells are to be placed, the angles at which said signs are to stand and the distances between points to be placed on said signs."

This map was made and filed by number J-4-3, title, "El Camino Real, Showing Locations of Bells." This map, unfortunately, is missing.¹⁰⁰

By 1907 Ventura was one of the leading counties in the installation of El Camino Real bells. The Ventura County Board of Supervisors took an active part, choosing twelve post locations at the most important intersections on this highway.¹⁰¹ The supporting Ventura societies, the location and number of bells were as follows:

Native Sons of the Golden West	Main St. & Vta. Ave.(1)
Native Daughters of the Golden W.	At the Mission(1)
Tuesday Club	2½ mi. at bridge(1)
Wed. Aftern. Club of Mound	2½ mi. from Mission(1)
Society of Pioneers	Los Angeles County line(2)
I.N.S. of Briggs	Santa Barbara County line(1)
Board of Supervisors	(1906)(5)
Avenue Club	New bridge at river(1)
Camino Real Society of Ventura	Casitas Summit(1)

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Other locations not identified with any organizations were: Borchard's ranch at Conejo (1), on High Road on the long grade (1), Camarillo (1), Springville (1), at T.A. Rice's (junction of Conejo Road and Los Angeles Ave.)(1), El Rio-Savies and Conejo junction (1), George Cook's place at the junction of the road leading to Saticoy (1), forks of the road two and one half miles east from San Buenaventura (1), near the bridge two and one half miles east of the Mission (1).¹⁰² In Ventura County all bell sign posts were to bear a brass tablet or plate stating the name of organization purchasing the sign post.

In a 1910 El Camino Real Association report, Mrs. Forbes presented a list of counties, cities (and their donors) that had erected bells, including the following for Ventura County.¹⁰³

Native Daughters Improv. Club	Mission San Buenaventura
NDGW, Cabrillo Parlor - Ventura Ave., two blocks from Mission	
Tuesday Club of Ventura ¹⁰⁴	One mile from Mission
Wed. Afternoon Club of Mound	Two miles from the Mission
Avenue Ladies Club of Ventura - Foster Park at the stone bridge	
Pioneer Society of Ventura	County line at Los Angeles
Pioneer Society of Ventura	County line at Santa Barbara
Vta. Bd. of Supervisors—Five bells from Los Angeles	County line
I.N.S. Woman's Club of Briggs	One bell
Section, Camino Real Association	One bell

The above lists are similar, but their differences reveal a significant struggle within the County for placement of the bells. In April 1909, the Ventura Tuesday Club had prepared a Bell

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Garden and placed a bell in the triangle park in front of the Thompson Lumber Company at the corner of Thompson and Front streets.¹⁰⁵ Other cities and towns in Ventura County lost no time in challenging restrictions on the erection of these bell guide posts. Simi, Moorpark and Santa Paula all laid claim to being, at one time or another, along the Camino Real and felt they were, therefore, entitled to have a bell. Even the Ventura County Board of Supervisors was charged with placing a bell on the wrong road. In true partisan form, Mrs. M.E. Dudley, member of the State Committee (of El Camino Real Association) defended the established route by explaining:

"I understand the wish of some of our citizens is to place the Bell sign posts...along the road through Santa Paula by Camulos Newhall etc. This can never be done as the name 'El Camino Real' is protected by copyright. These bells can not be placed except along the regularly laid out and officially accepted El Camino Real.

"...the following facts of history will tell you briefly why it was located by Conejo pass and not by way of Camulos and Newhall.

"...Mr. Del Valle was a member of the committee who located the road via Conejo and voted for the road as it now runs. He stated that the Camulos had only a horse trail until after Gen. Fremont built the road."¹⁰⁶

Another factor in the selection of the Conejo route was (following the original intention of the project) the "line"

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connecting the missions: Mission San Gabriel (1771); Los Angeles Pueblo (1781); Mission San Buenaventura (1782); Mission San Fernando (1797). Travel between these missions went from Mission San Gabriel via Los Angeles and Cahuenga Pass and Conejo through San Buenaventura for a term of 15 years before Mission San Fernando was founded. When Mission San Fernando was first established it was located on the lower part of Encino Rancho, situated directly on the road leading from Los Angeles Pueblo to Mission San Buenaventura; later it was moved to its present site, and immediately a road began to lead from Cahuenga Pass to the new Mission San Fernando and back again to the Encino Rancho and on to San Buenaventura.

A PROUD TRADITION

Ventura County still holds proudly to the history of Mission San Buenaventura, and to the ranchos, trails, pioneer families and their descendants, and continues to recognize the importance of keeping that history alive. Ventura County can boast of more than 24 bells along El Camino Real and other locations throughout the County.

In 1964, a bell, provided by the Native Daughters of the Golden West, was erected in front of the Ventura County Courthouse, now the Ventura City Hall.

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El Camino Real

Unless otherwise noted, copies of all materials listed are available at the VCMHA Library.

1. Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes, *California Missions and Landmarks* (Los Angeles: [s.n.] 1925), eighth edition, pp. 349-50. The first edition, issued by Mrs. Forbes, was published in 1903.
2. Louis R. Nardini, *No Man's Land: A History of El Camino Real* (New Orleans: Pelican Publishing Co. [1961]), p. 6.
3. Unpublished manuscript, "The History of El Camino Real from Los Angeles to San Francisco" (date and author unknown), p. 3. Manuscript located in the California Department of Transportation Library, Sacramento.
4. Sandra J. Elder, comp., "El Camino Real Bell Program," (Office of Historic Preservation, Dept. of Parks and Recreation, State of California -- Resources Agency, [June] 1968), 13 pp. This program includes SB-1123, highway code 123.5, CR 52, highway code sect. 650, 635, R 101. Ms. Elder was assistant executive secretary, State Historical Resources Commission.
5. Letter, dated August 7, 1980, from C.R. Krieger, supervisor Plans, Maps & Document Research Coordination, Office of Engineering, Division of Construction, California Department of Transportation to Frank L. Nelson of Novato, California.
6. See Leo Sutor, *El Camino Real: Grand March of the Padres* (Los Angeles: Anderson & Chanslor, ©1907). Copy located at the Simi Valley Historical Society, Strathearn Historical Park and Museum (see back cover).
7. The Ventura *Democrat*, June 19, 1904.

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8. Charlotte M. Hoak, "Let's go With David Douglas Along the El Camino Real," *Golden Gardens* (Los Angeles: California Garden Clubs, Inc.), June-July 1950 (vol. 14, no. 9), pp. 166, 171.

El Camino Real Association

9. This title has been used on the organization's official stationery since the name change in 1911; the original name was Camino Real Association. See Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes, *California Missions and Landmarks*, p. 363. See also "The Camino Real," *Out West* magazine for April 1904 (vol. 20), pp. 277-280, 389-390, 471.
10. Ben Blow, *California Highways: A Descriptive Record of Road Development by the State and by Such Counties As Have Paved Highways* (San Francisco: [s.n.] 1920), pp. 125-126. Mr. Blow was the manager of the Good Roads Bureau of the California State Automobile Association. The term "good" was a euphemism for "paved."
11. See Marco R. Newmark, "Pioneer Clubs of Los Angeles Founded During the Nineteenth Century," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, December 1949 (vol. XXXI, no. 4), pp. 299-317.
12. Henry Winfred Splitter, "Los Angeles Recreation, 1846-1900," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, March 1961 (vol. XLIII, no. 1), pp. 64-65.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Quoted in Edwin R. Bingham, *Charles F. Lummis: Editor of the Southwest* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1955), pp. 103-105.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105. See also John D. Bruckman, *The City Librarians of Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles Library Association, 1973), pp. 22-24. According to Bruckman, Lummis felt Tessa

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Kelso was a "woman of extraordinary business ability, quenchless energy, and a great executive force—in touch with the young science of libraries, she gave the institution a character and impetus which brought it into national prominence."

17. Bruckman, *City Librarians*, p. 104, n. 3.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
19. Blow, *California Highways*, pp. 125-126.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 12.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Forbes, *California Missions*, p. 354. Miss Pitcher was also active in fund raising for the fledgling Pasadena Public Library (1889) and arranged a thirteen-volume display of articles from leading western magazines that was shown at the Paris International Exposition, and at the National Education Convention in Los Angeles, before coming home to the Pasadena Public Library. See Gertrude K. Stoughton, *The Books of California* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1968), pp. 109-113.
28. Bingham, *Lummis*, pp. 108-113.
29. Forbes, pp. 354-55.
30. *Ibid.*

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31. Maynard Geiger, O.F.M., *The Franciscan 'Pony Express' of California in 1803* (Santa Barbara: Whitney T. Genns, 1972). Cf. Martin Morgado, *Junípero Serra: A Pictorial Biography* (Monterey: Siempre Adelante Publishing, 1991), pp. 46-47: "Contrary to legend, he [Serra] did not walk from California mission to mission, except once in 1779, from Mission Carmel to Mission Santa Clara (a distance of about 80 miles in two days). He normally rode a mule, occasionally a horse, and was accompanied by a military guard. As a contemporary stated: 'California is two hundred and five leagues in length. It is impossible to traverse the distance on foot. The distances from one mission to another are immense.'"
32. Forbes, *California Missions*, p. 355.
33. *Ibid.*
34. Newmark, "Pioneer Clubs of Los Angeles," pp. 304-309. See also, Thelma Lee Hubbell and Gloria R. Lothrop, "The Friday Morning Club: A Los Angeles Legacy," *Southern California Quarterly*, March 1968 (vol. L, no. 1) pp. 80-81. Mrs. Forbes was also responsible for the discovery of a lost treaty signed by Colonel John C. Frémont and General Andrés Pico which proved that Frémont, "whether justified or not in exercising such authority," had secured California for the United States. Under the auspices of the Historical Society of Southern California, Mrs. Forbes helped establish the historic park "Campo de Cahuenga" where the treaty had been signed.
35. Mrs. Forbes, a native of Pennsylvania, was born in 1863. Her husband, A.S.C. Forbes, was born in Italy of English parents. They were married on July 10, 1886, and lived in England where Mr. Forbes purportedly manufactured cameras. They later moved to the West Coast and (again purportedly) engaged in cattle raising, before moving to Los Angeles. See Grannis P. Parmelee, "The Bells Are Back on the King's Highway," *Westways* magazine for December 1963 (vol. 55, no. 12. pt. 1), pp. 26-27. This article was reprinted in the November 1966 issue of *Hobbies* magazine (vol. 71) pp. 98*O"-98*P." Copy of marriage license

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supplied by the Midwest Historical and Genealogical Society, Wichita, Kansas.

36. Forbes, *California Missions*, pp. 79-83.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 277-280, 389-90.
38. *Ibid.*
39. *Ibid.*
40. *Ibid.*
41. Forbes, p. 356.
42. *Out West*, pp. 277-280, 389-90.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-83.
44. Ventura *Daily Democrat*, Wednesday, March 10, 1904, "Millionaires Taking Interest in El Camino Real." The group was organized in the offices of James D. Phelan, in the Phelan Building. The people in attendance were: Allian Pollok, contractor and land developer; T. Cary Friendander, Merchants Exchange; Thomas McCabel; W.G. Irwin, president, Mercantile Trust Co.; Leon Sloss, president, Northern Commercial Co.; F.W. Dohrmann, president, Nathan Dohrmann Co.; M. Hecht; W. Greer Harrison, receiver, Market St. Securities; D.H. Borham. This last individual could not attend an early meeting because, "He is now widening and straightening the streets of Baltimore, having already performed like service for Washington and Chicago."
45. Santa Barbara *Morning Press*, Wednesday, April 20, 1904, "Camino Real Convention Opens with Unbound Enthusiasm."
46. Forbes, p. 358.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 359.

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48. California Bell Company catalog. Front cover of catalog states, "Since 1914."
49. L. Elsinore Springer, *That Vanishing Sound* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1976), pp. 52-55. One source that indicates Mrs. Forbes was, in fact, involved in the casting of the bells comes from Thelma Lee Hubbell and Gloria R. Lothrop, "The Friday Morning Club: A Los Angeles Legacy," *Southern California Quarterly*, March 1968 (vol. L, no. 1), pp. 80-81: "Though bell forging began as a hobby, it soon became a unique and profitable business for Mrs. Forbes. Before she had finished she had cast thousands. Along with the mission markers first erected at the Los Angeles Plaza in 1906 she created small replicas, mighty church bells, fire bells, and even school bells."
50. Addresses for the California Bell Company differ from that of the Novelty Company, also owned by the Forbes. In fact, there were four addresses: 126 W. 3rd St., Los Angeles; 335 W. 31st. St., Los Angeles; the third in La Canada; 708 Marengo, Alhambra. Sources: Los Angeles, South Pasadena and Alhambra city directories; plat books in the Archives of Los Angeles County Recorder's office; the Los Angeles *Times*, and various correspondence.
51. Letter, dated April 27, 1948, from Ray Hewitt, secretary-manager of the California Mission Trails Association, to the Ventura County Board of Supervisors.
52. Letter, dated May 15, 1929, from D.E. Watkins, secretary & general manager of California State Automobile Association, to Roy V. Bailey, associate editor, Sacramento *Bee*.
53. American Automobile Association strip maps (nos. 69-72), found in the *American Motorist* magazine for March 1912, p. 210.
54. Letter from Charles H. Purcell, State Director of Public Works, dated January 22, 1947, to the California State Automobile Association.

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55. By one account, only 17 of the original 110 bells were left standing in Los Angeles County; other counties counted even fewer survivors. See Parmelee, *Westways*, p. 27.
56. E.M. Sheridan, "Looking for Lost Camino Real Bell," from his collected "Historical Writings," vol. 6, p. 108. This article first appeared in the *Ventura Post*, January 10, 1925.
57. Letter from Eileen Dismuke, dated April 15, 1974, to Mrs. Loretta Trathen of Grass Valley, California. Letterhead, "Committee for El Camino Real."
58. State Senator John J. Hollister of Santa Barbara succeeded in having Senate Bill #23 passed in 1959, which restored the name El Camino Real to Highway 101. A similar bill had been introduced in 1957 by State Assemblyman Jack Schrader; this bill included the restoration of the bells to the "original" type of bell. The bill did not pass and died in committee. In 1959 Mr. Schrader put forth Assembly Concurrent Resolution # 52 to locate and re-erect bells removed from their standards. More than thirty bells were recovered and placed along Highway 101. See Parmelee, *Westways*, p. 27.
59. Parmelee, p. 27.
60. *Out West*, p. 82.

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61. Forbes, *California Missions*, pp. 351-53.
62. *Ibid.*
63. Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes, "El Camino Real," *The Grizzly Bear*, January 1908, p. 36.
64. Forbes, *California Missions*, p. 361.
65. *Official Gazette*, U.S. Patent Office, September 1, 1903, p. 82.

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66. "Our Mission Bell is the Model," *Santa Barbara Morning Press*, Tuesday, August 14, 1906.
67. "Rearing Signs on All Roads," *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, section III, August 13, 1906.
68. C.I.D. Moore, *In the Footsteps of the Padres* (Los Angeles: [April] 1930), p. 7. A cement cross was erected on the spot where Fr. Jayme fell in front of Mission San Diego.
69. *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, section III, August 13, 1906.
70. *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, section III, August 13, 1905. At the conclusion of the bell raising, a salute was fired by General Antonio Aguilar, one of the last surviving Spanish soldiers who defended Los Angeles. See Forbes, p. 362.
71. See John D. Weaver, *El Pueblo Grande: A Nonfiction Book About Los Angeles* (Los Angeles: Ward Ritchie Press, 1973), p. 149, for a description of the several locations of this church. It is worth noting that the boundaries of the original Spanish land grant were based on the distance from the church's front door; when the church moved, the center of the pueblo moved.
72. Forbes, *California Missions*, p. 362.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
74. Letter, dated May 15, 1914, from Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes to Miss Ida Blaine, recording secretary of Reina del Mar Parlor, Native Daughters of the Golden West.
75. American Automobile Association strip maps (nos. 69-72), *American Motorist* magazine, March 1912, p. 210.
76. California Highway Commission, minutes, February 11, 1914, Permit # 9.
77. Forbes, p. 363.

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78. Letter, dated June 6, 1910, from Mrs. Forbes to Charles Lummis.
79. Forbes, *California Missions*, p. 364.
80. Letter, undated, from Mr. and Mrs. G. Whitney of Upland, California, to the author. Their account of this gift is as follows:

"Mr. and Mrs. George H. Whitney with their two daughters, Mary Catherine and Olive Therese while visiting Petra, Majorca, Spain, met and visited with Dina Moore Bowden who was the inspiring Californian living on the island and whose interest was the birthplace and museum of Fray Junipero Serra. She was interested in obtaining [an] El Camino Real bell for the entrance of the museum. After numerous requests of many prominent persons throughout the State, she finally asked the Whitneys and the Whitneys were able to pick up and deliver [a bell] to the Museum where it now stands. The Whitney bell was the only gift that Serra received on the 250th anniversary of his birth. Many Californians are pleasantly surprised to find the California El Camino Real bell in Petra."

Another account of a similar gift, but a different bell, credits a different source:

"Perhaps the climax of the effort to bring back the bells took place this year on the Island of Majorca, Spain, the birthplace of Father Serra. The previous year a representative of the Museo Fray Junipero Serra in Petra, Majorca, in a congratulatory letter to Anna Marie and Everett Hager for their work on the *Cumulative Index to Westways* and *Touring Topics*, had suggested sending an original El Camino Real Bell to Majorca in 1963 for the 250th anniversary of the Mission Father's birthday. The suggestion proved a popular one. This past June a delegation from California, including Chief Justice Earl Warren, Lieutenant Governor Glenn Anderson, Father Noel Moholy of the Franciscan Missions, and Mayor of Los Angeles Samuel Yorty,

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delivered an original El Camino Real Bell to the Museum as a gift from California." See Parmelee, *Westways*, p. 27.

81. California Bell Company catalog (s.l.[La Canada?]:s.n.[California Bell Company], [c.1940]), front and back cover.
82. Letter from Ray Hewitt, secretary-manager, California Mission Trails Association, dated April 27, 1948, to the Ventura County Board of Supervisors.

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83. American Automobile Association strip maps (nos. 69-72), *American Motorist* magazine, March 1912, p. 210.
84. Ventura Daily *Democrat*, October 7, 1907, "Hot Roast for Main Highway, Road to Ventura as Bad as Possible."
85. Ventura *Star-Free Press*, Friday, February, 22, 1907, "The Beach Road."
86. Letter from Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes, secretary, El Camino Real [Association], Los Angeles section, undated, to potential Association members.
87. Flyer, El Camino Real Association, "Benefit for the Rincon Road," advertising "The Gilded Fool" by the Auditorium Stock Company, August 28-29, 1911. Flyer located in the Braun Research Library, Southwest Museum, Los Angeles.
88. Unpublished manuscript, "The History of El Camino Real from Los Angeles to San Francisco." Place, date and author unknown, p. 3. Copy in the California Department of Transportation Library, Sacramento.
89. Dedication Program, Ventura Freeway-Route 101 on the Rincon, Thursday, December 21, 1972, California Division of Highways, courtesy of the Automobile Club of Southern California .

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90. Ventura County Board of Supervisors, minutes, "In the Matter of the Establishment of 'El Camino Real.'" December 3, 1903, p. 64.
91. Ventura County Supervisors, minutes, "In the Matter of a Highway Commission for Ventura County," December 4, 1903, p. 65. Board Chairman was T.G. Gabbert. Other familiar names in the Highway Commission included: T.R. Bard; E.S. Thacher; C.H. McKeveit; A. Camarillo; Mrs. Frank Dudley; Chas. Donlon; R.P. Strathearn; John Darling, Sr.; E.P. Foster; T.A. Rice; N.W. Blanchard; L. Schiappa Pietra.
92. Personal diary of Charles Lummis, Charles Lummis Manuscript Collection, Southwest Museum.
93. The *Ventura Republican*, Thursday, June 15, 1904, "Two lectures by Charles Lummis."
94. The *Ventura Democrat*, January 28, 1904, "Camino Real."
95. The *Ventura Democrat*, Wednesday, March 30, 1904, "How Ventura County May Be Represented."
96. The *Santa Barbara Morning Press*, Wednesday, April 20, 1904, "Camino Real Convention opens with unbounded enthusiasm."
97. The *Ventura Democrat*, January 30, 1904, "El Camino Real."
98. *Ventura Daily Democrat*, Thursday, June 23, 1904, "Uncle Nathan Talks about the Camino Real."
99. Ventura County Supervisors, minutes, "Concerning Camino Real Sign Posts and Bells," December 7, 1906, p. 38.
100. Ventura County Supervisors, minutes, "In the matter of El Camino Real," February 12, 1907, p. 79.

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101. Ventura *Star-Free Press*, Friday, October 4, 1907, "The True 'Camino Real'" by Mrs. M.E. Dudley, explaining the reason for selecting the Conejo Route.
102. Ventura *Star-Free Press*, Friday, March 22, 1907, "Mission Bells on Camino Real" by Mrs. Dudley.
103. Annual report, El Camino Real Association, Los Angeles Section, December 31, 1910, "Bells in Ventura County."
104. Meeting notes of the Tuesday Club of Ventura, November 13, 1906, bk. 3, p. 137.
105. Ventura *Star-Free Press*, April 23, 1909, "Tuesday Club Makes Mission Bell Garden."
106. Mrs. M.E. Dudley, "The True Camino Real," Ventura *Daily Free Press*, Wednesday, October 2, 1907. It is highly unlikely that Fremont did much in the way of road building on his way to Los Angeles, although he may have unintentionally widened the road with men, fewer horses and canon in the prevailing rainy conditions. See Wallace E. Smith, *This Land Was Ours: The Del Valles and Camulos* (Ventura: Ventura County Historical Society, 1977), pp. 62-66.

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California Federation of Women's Clubs; Daughters of California Pioneers; Native Daughters of the Golden West; Native Sons of the Golden West; Society of California Pioneers;

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American Bell Association; Wells Fargo Bank, History Department;

State Historical Resources Commission, State of California, Sacramento; United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service;

Board of Supervisors, Ventura County; Board of Supervisors, Santa Barbara County.

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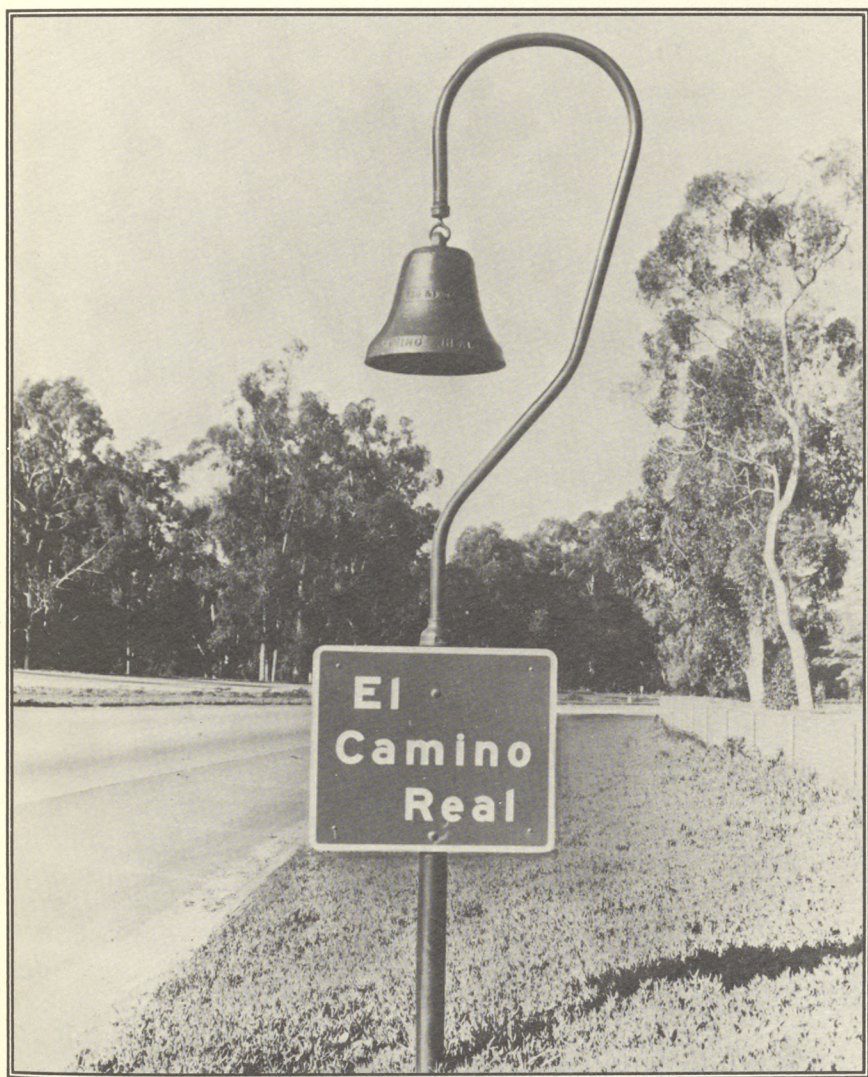
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**THE
VENTURA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY**

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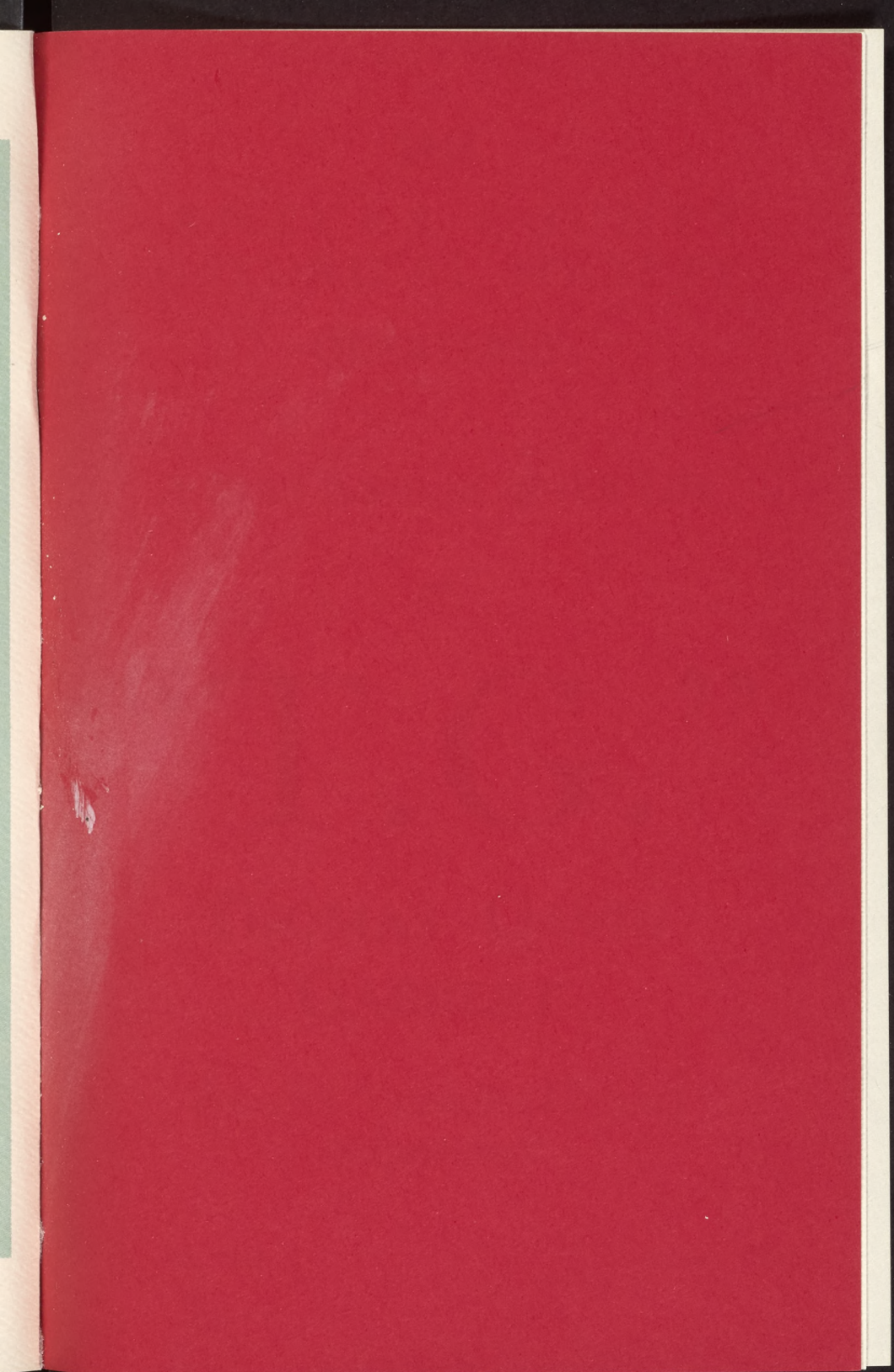
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GRAND MARCH
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THE
VENTURA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY

A Brief Account of the Life

of

“T.G.”

THOMAS GAVIN
GABBERT

Pioneer Ventura County
Supervisor

VENTURA COUNTY MUSEUM OF HISTORY & ART

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THE
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QUARTERLY

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A Brief Account of the Life
of
THOMAS GAVIN GABBERT
Pioneer Ventura County Supervisor

by
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

HOWARD M. GABBERT II, a seventh generation Californian, was born in Ventura. During his childhood, he moved with his family to several locations on the Pacific Coast including Ojai, Riverside, Watsonville, Berkeley, Oakland and Portland, Oregon. In 1943, he went with his family to El Salvador where he attended the Externado de San José in San Salvador. The following year he went with his family to Asunción, Paraguay, where he continued his education in the Spanish language at Colégio Internacional. In 1947, the Gabbert family relocated to San José, Costa Rica. At that point, Howard left home to finish high school at the New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell, New Mexico. Appointed to the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, New York, in 1950 by Congressman E.K. Bramblett, he graduated and was commissioned in the regular army in 1954.

He returned to Ventura County briefly to marry Andrea F. Teague, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Milton F. Teague, of Santa Paula. Their tours of duty together included several army installations in the United States, and overseas assignments in Alaska, Panama and Japan. They were fortunate to have but one separation, and that was due to Howard's service in Vietnam. They have two sons, Matthew, born in Santa Paula, and Andrew, who was born in Killeen, Texas.

Howard retired from active duty in the grade of colonel in 1979 to pursue a second career in industry with Fairchild Camera in Long Island, New York. In 1990, Howard decided to retire once again, and settled in Tucson, Arizona. He has assumed responsibilities for the Arizona State Genealogical Association, and is the editor of their quarterly journal, *The Copper State Bulletin*. He also publishes a quarterly newsletter for the Gabbard/Gabbert Family Association. A direct descendent of Juan María Sánchez, one of Ventura County's early land grantees under Mexican governor Alvarado, he is a member of Los Descendientes del Presidio de Santa Barbara.

A frequent visitor to Ventura County, he is currently working on a biographic study of Captain Robert J. Elwell, a pioneer settler in Santa Barbara. Named after his father, he has always used and been known by his nickname, "Corky."

“ T.G.”

A Brief Account of the Life
of
THOMAS GAVIN GABBERT
Pioneer Ventura County Supervisor

by
HOWARD M. GABBERT II

ON NOVEMBER 6, 1900, TOM GABBERT, the Republican candidate for Supervisor, 5th District, Ventura County, scored an upset victory over incumbent Emmett Crane. This started one of Ventura County's longest and most distinguished public service careers—one that spanned over 24 years. Tom's service included many terms on the County Board of Supervisors (serving several years as its chairman); a term as State Assemblymen; an early “mover and shaker” of the Ventura County Fair and other public works that included the Maricopa Highway and the Ventura School for Girls. Like many of the county's “near pioneers,” he started out with little more than youthful enthusiasm, a strong work ethic and ambition. This is his story.

Tom Gabbert's life began on a farm in Madison County, Iowa, near Winterset, the county seat. Madison County lies just southwest of Polk County, and the state capital, Des Moines. It was here that Tom's parents, **Jacob Gabbert** and **Mary Jane Bonine**, carved out a productive farm and raised a large family (Jacob Gabbert was himself the youngest of 16 children).¹

Tom's father, Jacob, was born September 18, 1819, and developed into a tall, strong, young farmer. He soon realized that the

Appalachian hills of southern Kentucky offered little opportunity for growth. All of his brothers and sisters had left the area and were doing well elsewhere. His oldest brother, Henry, had settled in Monroe County, Indiana. Brothers David and Jesse found life more to their liking in Scott County, Iowa. His parents, Michael and Elizabeth, were growing older, and the responsibility to take care of them fell on Jacob's shoulders.

Sometime in the spring of 1842,² young Jacob convinced his parents that they should go to Iowa. He had heard the soil there was more fertile and better suited to farming. Their move followed the path taken by many in those days: they sold the homestead, packed up all their belongings and hauled them down to Burkesville, the nearest port on the Cumberland River. Arriving at Burkesville, they then traveled by barge along a winding waterway through northwestern Tennessee and back into Kentucky, eventually reaching the Mississippi River at Cairo, Illinois. From there it was an easier ride up the Mississippi to Iowa.³ Jacob arrived in Iowa with his parents, some of their possessions, \$30 cash and a lot of ambition.

Jacob settled first in Jefferson County, where he worked land as a sharecropper near his brother Jesse and sister, Elizabeth Ragland. While there, he met and was swept off his feet by a girl named Mary Jane Bonine, who lived with her parents near Richland, in Keokuk County.⁴

Jacob and Mary Jane were married on June 6, 1847, and soon arranged to rent land from a well known local farmer and sheriff, Jim Gallagher. The farm was located near Fairfield in Jefferson County.⁵ By 1852, Jacob and Mary Jane moved to Madison County with the first 3 of their 15 children.⁶ They were hard working, dedicated farmers, and as soon as they had saved enough

earnings as renters and sharecroppers, they bought land in Madison County, moving there sometime in 1852. Their fifth child, **Thomas Gavin Gabbert**, was born there on January 11, 1854,⁷ and was named after his mother's father.⁸ Tom Gabbert was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. His father was building a farm starting with raw land and, by the time Tom came along, there were already seven mouths to feed. To characterize it, times were hard and food required many hours of work to produce. Jacob and Mary Jane continued their family until there were 15 youngsters. Several of the children, including their firstborn, did not survive infancy or childhood, however, eleven reached adulthood as Tom's siblings.



Jacob Gabbert's farm house, Madison County, Iowa, 1992.

Courtesy the author

On a recent trip to Madison County, Iowa, I was able to locate the remains of Jacob Gabbert's farmhouse, Tom's boyhood home. It is a two-story frame structure set over a cellar lined with hand-crafted blocks of limestone. It features a large brick fireplace and chimney, and was designed so that family living was downstairs and sleeping was upstairs. It is nestled in a grove of trees in the middle of a corn field with no road or driveway leading to it, and appears to have been struck by lightning and is quite "caved in." When Jacob died, he owned and farmed five parcels of land totalling 385 acres.⁹ Farming in the post-Civil War era demanded the use of much family labor, and Tom's earliest days can best be described as "learning farming from the ground up." While in Madison County, I also learned that the Gabbert farm was located in a section of land adjacent to Anson M. Peters' farm. Tom and his future bride, Ella Peters, had been neighbors!

EARLY DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION: DECIDING ON A LIVELIHOOD

Tom Gabbert's life on the farm followed an austere routine that developed his character. He went to school during the winter months and worked the farm in the spring and summer. By 1875 he had absorbed all the education available locally. He then traveled to the river port of Keokuk (in Iowa, there are two Keokuks—the county and the town) situated on the Mississippi River in Lee County, Iowa. There he attended a small, privately-owned business school, Baylies' College.¹⁰ Graduating in 1876, he returned to Madison County.

Tom's first job was as a schoolteacher in the Madison County school system. The district was noted for "tough farm kids" and the story goes that more than one teacher had been "run off" by some of the farm-boy scholars.¹¹ Tom Gabbert, however, was not



Thomas Gavin Gabbert,
High School Graduation, 1870
Courtesy the author

a person to be pushed around or intimidated. He had grown up as a farm boy in the same area. While not physically as large as his father,¹² he had developed a commanding presence of his own at an early age. During his first winter as a teacher, Tom Gabbert's authority was tested.

Iowa has always had tough winters, and when the snow began to fly, many of the local toughs would pack up a good supply of hard-packed snowballs. Thus armed, they often positioned themselves next to the pathway from the road into the school, and were able to cover it with an intense icy barrage. Aware of his position, Tom Gabbert decided to face the young men. Ignoring the flying snowballs, more of which missed than hit, he kept walking resolutely towards them until they were at "eyeball" range. At that point the "momentum of intimidation" shifted. Being able to look them squarely in the eye, and knowing them by name, he soon convinced them that their future relationship would be much better if they would cease and desist the snowballing. This fearless approach won the boys' respect, and it got Tom off to a good start. This type of approach to threats or problems became part of "T.G.'s" character and stood him in good stead throughout his life.

Some subjects that Tom Gabbert taught, such as algebra, were not part of his own prior curriculum. In order to maintain the essential aura of authority and student respect he had earned, he had to work extra hard to stay ahead of his class by studying at night at home. He continued teaching for about two years, then decided to return to farming.

ANSON PETERS

In 1879, Tom got a job on Anson Peters' farm in Madison County. Anson Peters was himself a character of note. After working as a lumberjack in Minnesota Territory (where he was also a part-time bounty hunter!), Peters moved to Clayton County, Iowa, where he became a merchant. In 1856, he went to California during the latter part of the gold rush and was one of the lucky ones who "struck it rich," and was also able to hang on to it. After 14 months of prospecting and mining, he acquired enough wealth to return to Clayton County and his family. His return trip is a story unto itself, and is highlighted by his being shipwrecked en route off the coast of Mexico.¹³ Peters' wife, Nancy Jane Smith, was from Essex County, New York. Their daughter, Ella, was born September 25, 1856, while they were living in a tent in a lumber camp in Minnesota.

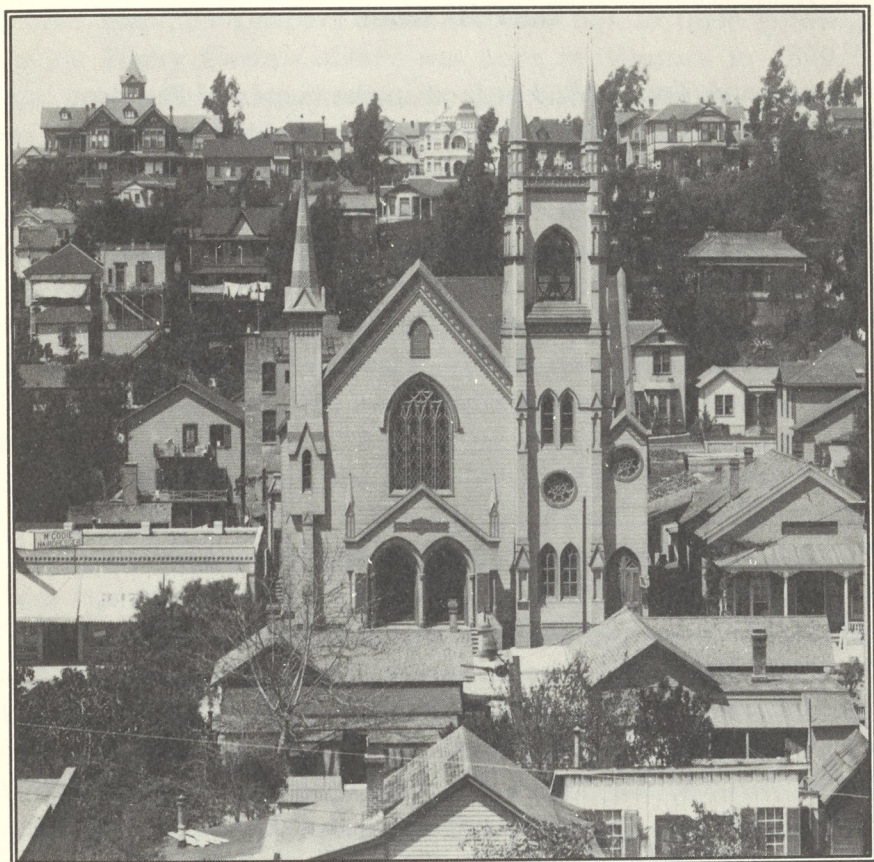
After the Civil War, Peters sold his business and moved to Madison County, Iowa. In 1868 he invested his "poke" in a full section of land, and proceeded to build "the finest farm residence in the county."¹⁴ The Peters' farm was located just to the north of the Gabbert farm, and their arrival had a profound and permanent influence on Tom Gabbert. The former school teacher fell in love with the boss's daughter, and on February 26, 1879, Tom Gabbert married Ella Peters.¹⁵

Anson Peters raised cattle and hogs on his 640 acre farm, and with 30 acres of fruit and nut trees and 25 acres of fine hardwoods, there was always plenty of work to do.¹⁶ Tom Gabbert's earlier farm experience turned out to be very useful. He and Ella rented a house just across the line in Dallas County. (It is interesting to note that the 1880 census of Madison County shows Tom's brother, Alonzo Gabbert, living on the Peters' place as a farm-hand.)

THE MOVE WEST: THE "EMIGRANT TRAIN" TO CALIFORNIA

Tom and Ella's first child, **Myron Howard Gabbert**, was born on February 20, 1880—just a few days shy of one year from the date they were married. Sadly, Tom's father, Jacob, died soon after in the spring of 1880.¹⁷ Two more sons, **John Raymond**¹⁸ and **Boyd Erven**,¹⁹ followed in 1881 and 1883 respectively. In the meantime, Anson Peters developed health problems with "lung fever." His doctor urged him to move to a milder climate for the winter months, so he decided to return to "sunny California." In the fall of 1883, he sold the big farm and house in Madison County to a Henry Thomson, and he and his wife, Nancy Jane and their youngest child, Lloyd, packed up their possessions and headed west. Tom and Ella Gabbert also realized that their future lay westward, so they too packed up their few possessions and, with their three children, followed along.²⁰

The trip from Iowa to California in early December 1883 was by train. The railroad special then was a combination of passengers and freight known as the "Emigrant Train." Reminiscent of the old wagon trains, its purpose was to provide a quick and inexpensive means of getting families and their possessions to the West. Everything was accommodated, including furniture, livestock, pets and children. The trip from Des Moines to Los Angeles took ten days. The two families arrived in Los Angeles before Christmas, and secured temporary lodging. Members of the Methodist-Episcopal Church in Madison County, they started their new lives by attending Christmas services at the old Fort Street Methodist Church.²¹



Old Fort Street Church, Los Angeles, 1890

*Courtesy California Historical Society/Ticor Title Insurance, Los Angeles,
Department of Special Collections, University of Southern California Library*

VENTURA COUNTY

Anson and Tom looked at land in the center of Pasadena but found it too expensive for farming. They decided to look farther north in Ventura County. Early in 1884, Anson bought acreage near Saticoy in Ventura County. Tom Gabbert spent his first two years in Saticoy where he established himself as a farmer. Tom then rented farmland from Slaughter D. Pinkard in the nearby La Colonia area. While in Saticoy Tom and Ella had their fourth child, **Richard Clarence**, in 1885.²² Soon afterward, they moved into the city of San Buenaventura.

The years 1883-1890 included an interesting and somewhat bizarre affiliation known as the "Blue Feather Boys." Noted Ventura historian Charles F. Outland described this association in an article entitled "The Saticoy Regulators."²³ During this period, horse stealing was a prevalent and serious crime in the county. In 1883, local citizens formed an action group to deal with the problem, and many of Ventura's well known pioneer citizens were members. Each purportedly wore a feather from a blue jay in the brim of his hat for identification. Anson Peters had experienced past success in catching horse thieves as a bounty-hunter in the Midwest, so it is no surprise he became involved. Tom Gabbert, who was always a no-nonsense supporter of law and order, was also listed as a member of this group (his relationship with Peters was, no doubt, a factor in his decision to join).²⁴

After five years in Ventura County, Anson Peters found the climate still too damp and cold; he needed more warmth and dryness. In 1890, he and Nancy Jane moved to the budding community of Fallbrook, north of San Diego, where they lived until 1912. They then retired to Pasadena where Anson lived until his death on December 20, 1922.

Tom and Ella Gabbert added another boy to their growing family. **Harry Gavin Gabbert** was born in Ventura in 1889.²⁵ After Anson Peters left the county, Tom Gabbert went to work on the Limoneira Ranch in Santa Paula. This was before C.C. Teague's purchase of the 2,300 acre Oliveland's tract. Limoneira was not yet the giant it was to become, but was still large scale farming with 413 acres planted in beans, corn and barley.

In addition to his farming background, Tom Gabbert was also a businessman, involving himself in county real estate transactions. He steadily added to his own land holdings in Moorpark, Las Posas, El Rio and Ventura. By 1892 he also owned a farm just west of Moorpark.²⁶

FOUNDATIONS OF A POLITICAL CAREER

The year 1900 marked a major milestone in Tom Gabbert's career. It was a major national and local election year. Nationally, William McKinley defeated William Jennings Bryan for the second time. Locally, a strong, Republican elite under Judge B.T. Williams controlled Ventura County. From 1900-1902, a change took place in Ventura County politics—a growing, entrepreneurial middle class raised its voice. There were five political districts in the County, comprising 29 voting precincts by November 1900. The biggest growth in the party was in the middle class.

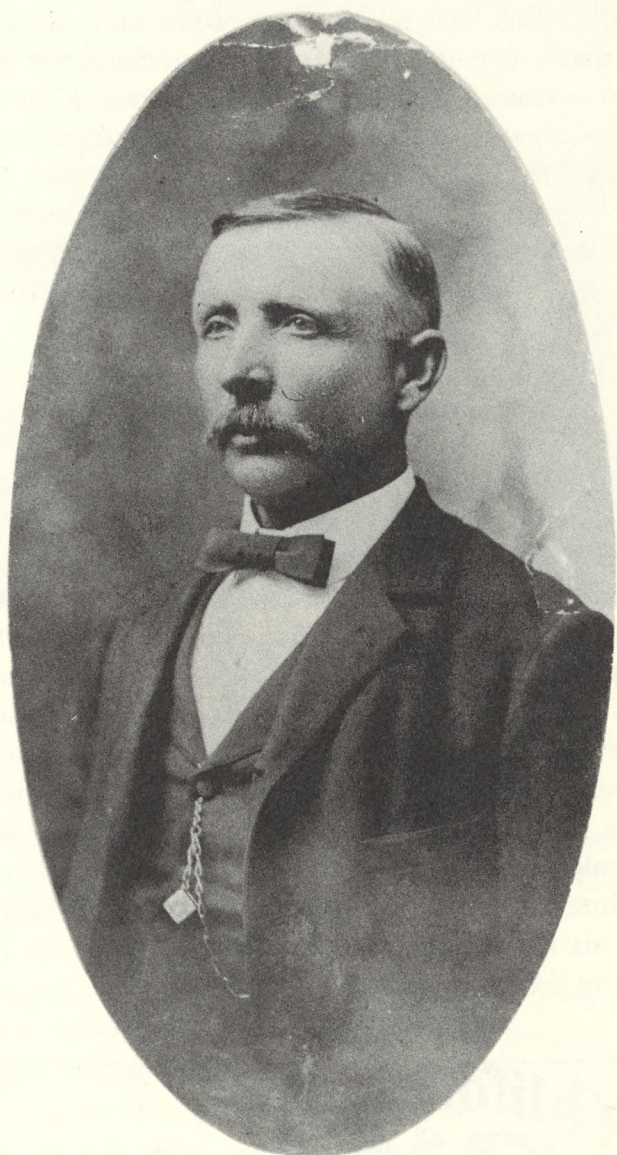
Tom Gabbert had established himself as a shrewd businessman characterized by hard work, honesty and fairness. He developed a local constituency that persuaded him to run for county supervisor. His opponent was incumbent Emmett C. Crane, son of one of the county's first settlers.²⁷ When the dust settled in the Fifth District, Tom Gabbert had defeated Crane by a count of 405 votes to 181, carrying all precincts but one (Saticoy No. 2).

In January 1901, Tom Gabbert joined three other Republicans and one Democrat on the Ventura County Board of Supervisors.²⁸ He served for eight consecutive years as a county supervisor from the Fifth District, which largely consisted of the area east from Saticoy to Moorpark and south to Oxnard. He soon earned his colleagues' respect, gaining the reputation of being a stern taskmaster who quickly cut through to the heart of an issue. As he served, he was given additional responsibilities as chairman of various committees.

THE REVOLT OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

It was an interesting period in California politics wherein the middle class actually rose and up and took control of their own destiny. One of the leaders of this middle class revolt was Ventura's distinguished senator, Thomas Bard. He was profoundly opposed to the undue and continued influence of the Southern Pacific Railroad on California's public life.²⁹ When Bard was elected to the senate in 1900 (the same year Tom was elected supervisor), he effectively broke the strangle hold the Southern Pacific had on California politics by defeating their candidate, Daniel Burns, who had only recently been accused of graft. This began the middle class surge to the political forefront, which peaked with the election of Hiram Johnson as governor in 1910. He, like Thomas Bard, was dedicated to breaking the Southern Pacific's power-base in California politics. Politically and ideologically, Tom Gabbert was of the same stripe. He became a member of the group referred to within the Republican Party as the "Progressives."

In October 1890, a group of enterprising citizens, "dissatisfied with the high price of lumber and generally disgruntled at having to sell at wholesale and buy at retail," formed the Peoples Lumber



Tom Gabbert, Supervisor,
Fifth District

Company.³⁰ Tom's wife Ella was one of the earliest stockholders, having 2 shares of common. Other early stockholders were Caroline McGuire Gosnell (1 share) and her husband, Truman Barrick Gosnell (2 shares); original shareholders were apparently limited to 2 shares. (This bit of trivia is somewhat relevant because in 1929, their grandchildren would marry and become my parents!³¹) Tom Gabbert had several dealings with Truman Gosnell in later years involving disputes over oil rights in the Ventura Avenue area.³²

On January 31, 1903, the issue of Oxnard's incorporation as a city and separate political body arose. Supervisors Charles Daily, Tom Gabbert and E.F. Warren were solidly in support of the measure. Supervisors F. Hartman and D.A. Smith were against it. Tom Gabbert's son, Ray, a graduate of Ventura High School in 1899, was working at the time as a reporter for the Oxnard *Courier*. He took an editorial position opposed to that of his father. Tom bore Ray no resentment for that opposition and actually respected him for it. Their relationship was quite close and was one that could tolerate differing political views. After a four-year apprenticeship with the *Courier*, Ray attended the University of California. With Tom's help, Ray bought the *Courier* in 1907. In 1912, he sold that newspaper, moved to Riverside and acquired a one-half interest in the Riverside *Enterprise*. Tom Gabbert later financed his acquisition of the remaining half. In 1915, Ray founded the *California Citrograph*.³³

The California
Citrograph



Thomas G. Gabbert Family, c.1902
 L to R: Top: Clarence, Boyd, Harry, Ray
 Bottom: Tommy, "T.G.," Ella, Myron

In 1925, Governor Friend Richardson appointed Ray Gabbert as state real estate commissioner. This fact, along with Tom Gabbert's relationship with his son Ray, was pointed to by Roy Pinkerton in his book, *The County Star: My Buena Ventura*:

One of the peculiar 'assets' that we acquired with the Post, we discovered, was a dab of political gravy, cash value not specified. The nature of the gratuity was described in a letter written by the head of a department of the State of California on official stationery.³⁴

Mr. Pinkerton goes on to describe the contents and significance of the letter in great detail and how its objective was the allocation

of political advertisements for the governor's election campaign to designated newspapers, but with remuneration for same accruing to many more papers. Pinkerton later brought the issue to public attention, and in a small way it helped C.C. Young defeat Richardson. Pinkerton concludes:

And what reward did the fledgling County Star, which had supplied the ammunition, receive? Well, the indignant Ventura county supervisors at once began refusing the County Star its share of county advertising, a ban that continued for two or three years. The chairman of the board was the father of the indiscreet state official who wrote the letter.

In 1907, the Board of Supervisors appointed Tom Gabbert to chair a committee formed for the purpose of purchasing the county's first official automobile. A Stevens-Duryea six-cylinder touring car was ultimately selected. The car's driver was liveryman, Ed Mercer. The Board shared the car with Sheriff Ed McMartin, who was a close friend of Tom's. Both men were political products of Ventura County's Republican Party "revolt of the middle class." Tom Gabbert stood solidly behind law enforcement people and their agencies. In 1921, Sheriff McMartin died in a gun battle with fugitive José Duran.³⁵ This outraged Tom Gabbert, then chairman of the Board of Supervisors. He led the Board in recognizing McMartin's outstanding service to the county.

By 1908, Tom Gabbert had served two terms as a county supervisor, and by the end of his second term, was elected as its chairman. When election time rolled around in November, Tom did not to seek re-election, deciding instead to dedicate more time to building his growing real estate business. He did not, however, fade from public service.



First County Car, "a Stevens-Duryea six-cylinder." Ed Mercer at the wheel, Sheriff McMartin at right.

Tom and Ella Gabbert moved into Ventura in 1909, and built a large, comfortable home on the corner of E. Main and Hemlock Streets.³⁶ Later, Tom bought a smaller home at 1095 E. Santa Clara Street, where he lived the remainder of his years.

CONTINUED PUBLIC SERVICE

In 1911, the county Probate Court appointed Tom Gabbert as one of the special administrators to inventory and assess the 8,000-plus-acre Taylor estate. He also served as a consultant to his good friend, Adolfo Camarillo, then chairman of the Board of Supervisors, about the planning of a new county courthouse. Again, his son, Raymond, editorializing in the *Oxnard Courier*, opposed the building in Ventura, naturally espousing an Oxnard location.³⁷



Ventura County Board of Supervisors, 1900.

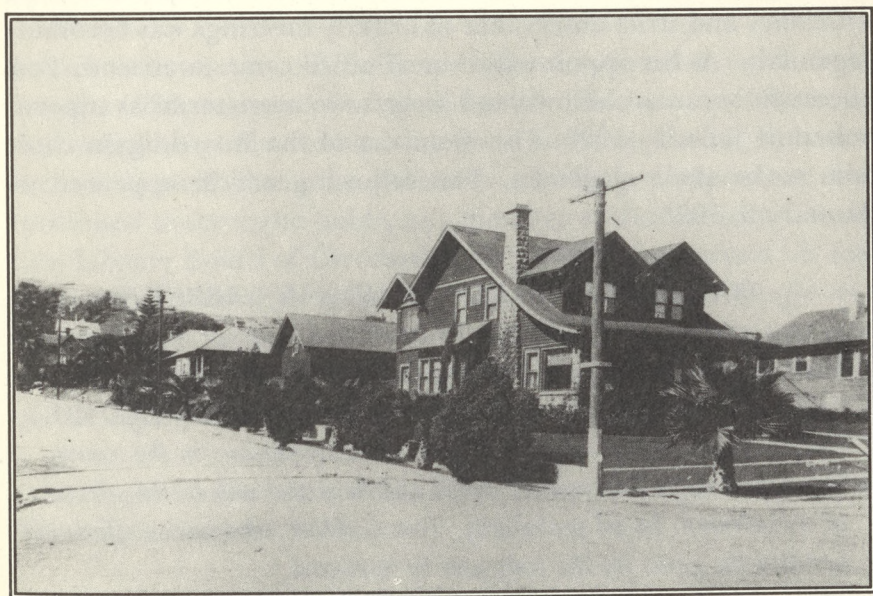
L to R: R. Touchton (Santa Paula), T.G. Gabbert, D.S. Smith (Ojai), F. Hartman (Ventura), A.B. Smith (Hueneme).

Tom ran for, and was elected to, the California State Legislature in 1912, where he served one term in this capacity. While a State Representative, he was also elected president of the Ventura Chamber of Commerce, a body he had helped to establish. He was also a member of the Ventura Rotary Club, the Ventura Elks Lodge, and was active in local Masonic circles.

In 1913, while a member of the Board of Supervisors, Tom Gabbert was among those who accepted Dr. Cephas Bard's (brother of Senator Thomas Bard) collection of curios "...to be placed in the Chamber of Commerce Rooms in the Court House to form the beginning of a County Historical Museum."³⁸ This

was the first step in what eventually evolved into today's Ventura County Museum of History & Art.

The Ventura County Fair Association elected Tom Gabbert as its first president in 1914. He also served as a member of the Ventura Harbor Commission, and was a county representative to the Tri-County Highway Commission that sponsored development of a highway to Kern County, traversing parts of Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. Today, that route is known as State Highway 33 or Maricopa Highway. Another institution that Tom Gabbert helped to found, and served as its president, was the Ventura Realty Board.³⁹



Gabbert home, corner of Main and Hemlock Streets

Later, Tom was again called to public service. In January 1917, just one day after his inauguration, newly elected Supervisor William Cook was killed in an accident. Governor Hiram Johnson appointed Tom Gabbert to fill the practically full term of Mr. Cook. This was a busy time in Tom's life, and by 1918 he employed the services of two secretaries, Caroline Newman and Catherine Clemmons.

A few years later, there was an outbreak of hoof and mouth disease in the county, and Tom Gabbert was appointed chairman of the county's disinfecting program.⁴⁰

In the middle of his appointed term as supervisor, Tom was once again elected Board chairman in 1920. His penchant for efficiency and strict observance of orderly meetings was becoming legendary. As his appointed term of office came to an end, Tom successfully ran on his own and served two more terms as supervisor until January 1926. The members of the Board again chose him to be their chairman. The following article appeared on January 3, 1925:

BOARD TO RE-ELECT CHAIRMAN GABBERT

Next Tuesday, January 6, will be a highly important meeting of the county board of supervisors. It will be the first such session of 1925, and, as such, will be of great interest to many persons in the county. One of the important matters which will be settled will be the selection of a chairman. In all probability, Tom Gabbert, who has so efficiently handled the gavel for the body will be re-elected.

On Tuesday, January 6, 1925, the following article appeared in the evening paper:

GABBERT IS HONORED AGAIN BY SUPERVISORS

Thomas G. Gabbert, popular local supervisor, will continue as chairman of the board, his fellow members unanimously declaring themselves today for him to continue in the post of honor and responsibility. He has had long service as a supervisor and chairman of the board, and enjoys the confidence of his colleagues and the people of the county in a way which he may well be proud of. Chairman Gabbert was first elected to the board in 1900, and served from 1902 to 1904 as its chairman. He retired from the board in 1908. In 1917, he was appointed by Governor Hiram Johnson to succeed supervisor William Cook, killed after he had served one day. He rose to his present high position in 1920, and has since capably, honestly, and conscientiously filled the post.

After one year in office, Tom Gabbert suffered a mild stroke and, in 1926, resigned due to ill-health. This was not, however, the end of his public service or private business. He felt he had to remove himself from the pressures of being a supervisor, but continued to serve the public as a member of the Ventura County Law Library Board of Directors, and, in 1929, he opened his real estate office on California Street. He continued to be sought as a consultant by various members of the Board of Supervisors, and while not serving with his presence, still exerted a strong influence on the Board and its members.

Southern California historian J.M. Guinn said the following of Thomas G. Gabbert:

...While meeting with success in his agricultural efforts he has at the same time won a place of prominence among the public spirited citizens of Ventura county, having labored untiringly not only to further his own interests, but those of the community at large, and by

by his persistent energy, strict attention to business affairs, honorable dealings, and superior management, has attained a high standing in financial and social circles. Liberal in his views and public spirited, he takes an intelligent interest in local matters, being ever among the foremost in establishing beneficial projects, and is now serving in his second term as supervisor, in that capacity performing the duties devolving upon him with credit to himself and to the honor of his constituents....⁴¹

John Raymond Gabbert said that Tom was one of the kindest and most generous men who ever lived. Not only did he go far in helping his sons get started in their various life activities, he also helped many others in their financial affairs. He helped his sons Myron and Clarence acquire their farms, and was always ready to lend a hand whenever his sons needed it. This was his way, and as a result, by the time he died much of his estate was consumed by the payment of debts incurred while helping his family. Tom Gabbert lived for his family, first and foremost. He left his wife Ella with a home and sufficient income to see her through her final days.

Judge John G. Gabbert of Riverside (Ray's son) recalls a number of visits by his grandfather, T.G. Gabbert.⁴² As John recounts, T.G. usually drove down by himself to visit with his son, Ray, and play checkers with him. Evidently, T.G. was a master strategist at the game, and used every tactic available to disarm his opponent and lure him into a careless mistake. He used to delight in kidding Ray to the point that it broke his concentration. T.G. also liked to peel and eat apples while playing. Using a small, ivory-handled penknife (which he always carried), he would peel the apple from the top in a long spiral. John recalls how that activity in itself was distracting as he found himself focusing on the ever-lengthening peel. T.G. would then follow this exercise

by slicing the apple carefully and offering John small pieces impaled on the knife point. The result was just about always a clean sweep of the game board for Tom Gabbert.

John Gabbert tells of another occasion showing Tom Gabbert to be a man of action. At a family picnic in the early 1920s in the Ojai area, attended by Ella Gabbert's parents and relatives from the Peters' family, a commotion arose when a small piece of real estate under the picnic table was contested for by a coiled rattlesnake whose tail was sounding a warning to all. Tom Gabbert just happened to be seated at the table near the snake, and, without hesitation, launched his boot heel with such force that it swiftly crushed the snake's head. It all happened in an instant. Some of the ladies at the table were critical of his rash action, but Tom Gabbert coolly replied that he had no intention of letting that snake bite any of the children (apparently one of the Peters children had been bitten the year before near their home in Pasadena!).

Thomas Gavin Gabbert died on September 30, 1937, at the age of 83. The next day, the Ventura County *Star Free Press* printed the following obituary notice:⁴³

T. G. Gabbert Dies Of Long Illness

*Pioneer Civic Leader And Rancher
First Came To Ventura County In 1883*

Thomas G. Gabbert, 83, pioneer Ventura county rancher, civic leader and former chairman of the county board of supervisors, died at his home, 1095 E. Santa Clara Street,⁴⁴ at 12:30 p.m. today following a long illness.

...His surviving widow, the former Ella Peters, was married to Mr. Gabbert in 1879 in Iowa. He is survived also by a younger sister, Mrs. E.H. Foster of Sioux City, Iowa, and by six sons, Myron H. Gabbert of Ventura, J.R. Gabbert of Riverside, Judge Boyd E. Gabbert of Ojai, Harry Gabbert of Berkeley, and Dr. Thomas A. Gabbert of San Francisco, and Clarence Gabbert of Ventura.

...The surviving grandchildren are Walker Gabbert of Los Angeles, Mrs. Walter Marriott of Ventura, Howard Gabbert of Ventura, James Gabbert of Ventura, John G. Gabbert of Riverside, Mrs. Jane Sanders of Conway, Ark., and Peggy Marion and Jean Gabbert of Berkeley. He is survived by seven great grandchildren.

Tom Gabbert's funeral cortege reflected the high esteem in which he was held by the various law enforcement bodies in Ventura County. His final escort included the Ventura police, the County Sheriff's office, and the California Highway Patrol. His widow, Ella Peters Gabbert, survived him for nearly one year, and died on August 31, 1938. His six sons were each successful in their own right. Three of them, Myron, Boyd and Clarence, lived in Ventura. The last living grandson is Judge John Gabbert of Riverside, California. The only descendants left in Ventura County today are Boyd Gabbert's daughter, Zoella, widow of Walter Marriott (and recently married to Mr. Roland Lakin), and her son Walter B. "Pete" Marriott, Jr. **Zoella Gabbert Marriott Lakin** is a Life Member of the VCMHA, and **Walter B. Marriott, Jr.** is a vice president on the VCMHA Board of Directors.

I remember meeting my great-grandfather, Tom Gabbert, on a few occasions. One of these was a family holiday gathering (Christmas 1936, I believe) at Myron Gabbert's ranch just east of Seaward Avenue on the bluff overlooking Pierpont Bay. He was referred to by the family as "Grandpa Gabbert" or "T.G." I recall him sitting in the living room and smiling. He didn't have much

to say, but his eyes were very penetrating. Neither I nor my brothers required disciplinary reminders in his presence; we were held in awe. Tom Gabbert was just that—an awesome person!

Today there are few visible reminders of T.G.'s tenure in Ventura County. One can be seen driving from I-5 through Simi Valley and Moorpark, on Los Angeles Road. Just before leaving Moorpark there stands a green and white sign that says "Gabbert Road." Another is a bronze tablet on the old bridge that crosses the creek near Foster Park. Here T.G.'s name as "Chairman of the Board" is emblazoned. That's not far from where he stomped the rattlesnake!



The Gabbert Family, c.1930
L to R: Top: Thomas A., Clarence, Harry, Raymond,
Bottom: Boyd, T.G., Ella, Myron

NOTES

Abbreviations

VCBS Ventura County Historical Society
VCMHA Ventura County Museum of History & Art

1. See Jack Ferguson, *Early Times in Clinton County* (Albany, Ky: J. Ferguson, 1986). Jacob's parents, Michael and Elizabeth Brown Gabbert, had settled in Cumberland County, Kentucky. That area later became Clinton County in 1836. Michael was a trustee and co-founder of Paoli, Kentucky, a small village eventually displaced by Albany.
2. *History of Madison County, Iowa, Containing a History of the County, Its Cities, Towns, &...* (Des Moines: Union Historical Co., 1879).
3. The route is reconstructed from the description of a return visit to Clinton County in 1857 by John Gabbert Ragland in a letter to Thomas Gavin Gabbert, November 1, 1901.
4. Mary Jane's father was Thomas A. Bonine, a Quaker from Tennessee, who had come to Iowa recently by way of Indiana. Mary Jane's mother was Patsy Talbot, a family whose ancestry has been traced back to Charlemagne.
5. Jacob's father, Michael, apparently died before Jacob's marriage. The family buried Michael on David Gabbert's farm in Scott County. Jacob's mother, Elizabeth Brown Gabbert, and his brother, David, both died of smallpox in the winter of 1854. Their graves are also on David's farm in Scott County.
6. Letter from John Gabbert Ragland to Thomas G. Gabbert, November 1, 1910.
7. Iowa Census Record, vol. 125, p. 1026, fam. 66, line 26, gives the date as 1853. Other biographical articles give the year as 1854. Analysis supports 1854 date as the more likely date in light of other sibling births. Tom's older brother, Alonzo, was born November 8,

NOTES

1852—that would make Tom's birth an unlikely two months later. Tom's younger brother, Michael, was born May 22, 1855. That would be 16 months after the 1854 date, and is therefore the logical choice.

8. The repeated use of the name Gavin seems to suggest it was a family name, but to date accurate research of all direct genealogical lines does not show it.
9. From Madison County, Iowa, probate records, 1880.
10. Recent correspondence with the Lee County Genealogical Society proves the existence of this school on the corner of 6th and Main Streets. It apparently ceased operation after 1876, and was never listed in the state school directories. It was, however, listed in *Holland's Keokuk City Directory* (1874), p. 69.
11. Unpublished manuscript by John Raymond Gabbert provided by John G. Gabbert.
12. John Ragland Gabbert described Jacob in his letter to Tom as follows: "Uncle Jacob" was six feet high, large boned, and carried, when I knew him, no superfluous flesh. In his prime, he could do as much work as any man I ever saw. It was no trouble for him to split a hundred rails or cut a cord of wood in a day, and that where the wood was anything but clear and straight."
13. Millie Peters Embree, "History of Anson Maxwell Peters," unpublished manuscript, circa 1922.
14. *History of Madison County, Iowa, Containing a History of the County, Its Cities, Towns, &...* (Des Moines: Union Historical Co., 1879). The elegant house, which featured a hand-carved, 12-inch, black-walnut balustrade was a county landmark until it burned to the ground in 1943. The barn, of New England design, was solidly set on a lime-stone-block foundation, and is still standing and in use to this day.

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15. Ella Peters was also a school teacher. While no proof has been found, it is my feeling that they knew each other in that environment, and that may have been a contributing factor in Tom's decision to quit teaching and go to work for Ella's father. While in Madison County last summer, I found an entry in Book B, Marriages, page 223, that recorded Thomas Gabbert's marriage to Ella Peters in a double ceremony, along with a J.W. Barnett and Ella's cousin, Eudora Peters.
16. Peters' farm was 10 miles from Winterset, five miles from DeSoto, and 22 miles from Des Moines. Plotting these dimensions on a current map places the farm just east of Earlham, Iowa.
17. Jacob Gabbert died on April 22, 1880. His last will and testament was dated April 3, 1880, so his death must have been expected. He signed his will with an "X." He was buried just a few miles from his home in Fairview Cemetery, and his well cared-for grave, along with that of his wife and several of their children, are there today.
18. John Raymond Gabbert (b. June 5, 1881, m. June 25, 1908) to Elizabeth Gordon (d. January 28, 1963).
19. Boyd Erven Gabbert (b. April 4, 1883, m. September 3, 1904) to Zoe Healy (d. August 4, 1955).
20. While visiting Madison County last summer, we met some distant cousins who insisted on my taking two wooden straight chairs. They told us that these chairs, which were originally part of a set of six belonging to Tom and Ella Gabbert, had been left behind when Tom and Ella moved to California. We were also given an old photograph that shows some of Tom's siblings at a family reunion. One of these same chairs is in the picture, and is noticeably empty in recognition of Tom's absence.
21. Embree, "History." The Fort Street Church, erected in 1875, had a congregation of 300 by 1880. See *History of Los Angeles County California*... (Oakland: Thompson and West, 1880), p. 120. Accord-

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ing to Guy Bishop of the Seaver History Center, Los Angeles Museum of Natural History, it is highly likely that Fort Street, running between and parallel to Spring and Hill Streets, was later renamed Broadway. From the 1883 Los Angeles City Directory, Mr. Bishop was able to locate this church on Fort Street between 3rd and 4th Streets, near the present-day site of the well known Bradbury Building.

22. Richard Clarence Gabbert, known in the family as "Uncle Louie," (b. October 12, 1885, m. 1910) to Caroline Blum (d. 1954 in Ventura).
23. VCHS *Quarterly* for August 1957 (vol. II, no. 4), pp. 13-16.
24. According to Outland, although stories abounded concerning mean-spirited vigilantism and lynching, "...at no time after their formation in 1883 did the Blue Feather Boys [known alternately, according to some, as the "Blue Tails," and "Regulators"] ever resort to vigilante action," and "...were among Ventura's best citizens." The members were: John Alexander, J.Q. Alexander, H.W. Baker, W.B. Baker, E.K. Bither, David Brown, J.D. Carty, E.C. Crane, G.G. Crane, J.L. Crane, I.T. Criss, J.F. Cummings, David Darling, John Darling, J.M. Dickenson, Charles Duval, E.A. Duval, James Evans, T.C. Farwell, G.W. Faulkner, T.G. Gabbert, A.M. Graham, Will Graham, Thomas Harwood, O.F. Hawley, E.E. Huntley, Joseph Kelsey, C.M. Kimball, T.J. Knox, James McClure, J.L. Meyers, Monroe Miller, Mr. Morgan, R.G. Pardee, A.M. Peters, W.E. Ready, W.D.F. Richards, S.B. Rose, J.M. Sharp, William Slinger, G.A. Smith, N.H. Spencer, A.T. Steel, William Suytar, A. Walton, C.T. Wason, H.P. Webb, and M.F. Wells.
25. Harry Gavin Gabbert (b. July 9, 1889, m. 1916) to Florence Doyle (d. 1966).
26. This was in an area 2 miles west of Moorpark. Gabbert Canyon and Gabbert Road were named after him.

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27. Jefferson L. Crane, a native of Ohio, arrived in Ventura County in November 1861.
28. *Ventura Independent*, November 2, 1900.
29. T.H. Watkins, *California, An Illustrated History* (Palo Alto: American West Publishing Co., 1973), p. 285.
30. See Margaret Jennings, "The Peoples Lumber Company," *VCHS Quarterly* for winter 1985 (vol. XXX, no. 2). The members of the Board of Directors, as recorded in the original articles of incorporation were: C.D. Bonestel (Ventura), F.A. Foster (Ventura), J.M. Sharp (Saticoy), J.B. Robbins (Springville), G.W. Faulkner (Santa Paula), J.R. Willouby [Willoughby] (Ventura), F.S. Cook (Ventura).
31. Howard M. Gabbert (b. November 16, 1906, son of Myron Gabbert and Mabel Jones), eloped with, and married Marjorie Caroline Gosnell (b. April 13, 1910), daughter of Ira Gosnell and Mary Elizabeth Selby, on May 24, 1929, in Reno, Nevada.
32. Gosnell's wife, Caroline, was the sister of William McGuire of Ojai. The Gosnells and the McGuires all came to Ventura from Ohio. See Yda Addis Storke, *A Memorial and Biographical History of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura, California* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1891), pp. 295, 411. One of the biggest and most famous civil suits to ever take place in Ventura County was Gosnell vs. Lloyd in 1937. Prior to that, T.B. Gosnell had frequently sought Tom Gabbert's advice on which development options he should pursue on the 13 acres leased to Shell Oil of California through Ralph B. Lloyd. Tom Gabbert died before that lawsuit was resolved.
33. John Raymond Gabbert, *History of Riverside City and County* (Riverside: Record Publishing Company [1935]), p. 365.
34. Roy Pinkerton, *The County Star: My Buena Ventura* (Ventura, 1962), p. 22.

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35. See Patricia A. Clark, "Portrait of a Sheriff," *VCHS Quarterly* for summer 1990 (vol. XXXV, no.4).
36. It was complete with carriage house and barn in the rear. My father, who attended Plaza School through the 6th grade, would ride his pony from Myron's ranch out on Seaward Avenue to school, stable it in Tom Gabbert's barn, and walk from there. Today the site is occupied by an apartment house that was built after World War II. The old T.G. Gabbert house was moved and now sits halfway up on the east side of Hemlock Street, north of Main Street. Its movement must have been a difficult job. It is still there, but appears to be in a state of decline and in need of maintenance.
37. R.G. Percy, "Ventura as I Knew it," *VCHS Quarterly* for fall 1976 (vol. XXII, no. 1), p. 27.
38. E.M. Sheridan, "Historical Writings," vol. 8, p. 53.
39. John Raymond Gabbert, unpublished note (Riverside, Calif.).
40. See Sheridan, "Historical Writings," vol. 7, p. 103.
41. J.M. Guinn, *A History of California and an Extended History of its Southern Coast Counties* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1907), 2 vols., vol. I, p. 576.
42. Letter from Judge John G. Gabbert, to the author, dated July 30, 1991.
43. The complete text of the notice is as follows:

T. G. Gabbert Dies Of Long Illness

Pioneer Civic Leader And Rancher
First Came To Ventura County In 1883
Services Await Word From Sons

NOTES

Thomas G. Gabbert, 83, pioneer Ventura county rancher, civic leader and former chairman of the county board of supervisors, died at his home, 1095 E. Santa Clara Street, at 12:30 p.m. today following a long illness.

He was born on a farm in Madison county, Iowa, on January 1854, the son of Jacob and Mary Gabbert, and received his early education in the public schools of his native state, graduating from the Baylies Business College in Keokuk, Iowa, in 1876.

Came Here in 1885

In 1883 he came west and settled in Saticoy, moving to Ventura in 1885. Three years later he moved to the Limoneira ranch and in 1892 to the old Pinkerton ranch in El Rio.

The family moved to Ventura in 1909, where Mr. Gabbert engaged in real estate and insurance business, maintaining an active interest in his ranching properties on the side. At the time of his death, he owned large acreage in the Las Posas and Moorpark district.

He was first elected to the county board of supervisors in 1900, retiring after eight years. In 1912 he was elected from this district to the state legislature, where he served one term. In 1916 he was appointed by Hiram Johnson to fill a vacancy on the board of supervisors, a position he filled until he resigned because of ill health in January, 1926.

Was Civic Leader

Many of his years on the county board were spent as chairman of that body. He was at one time president of the chamber of commerce and served as president of the Ventura realty board. He was prominent in Masonic circles and an active member of the Ventura Elk's lodge, Rotary club, and at one time was an active member of the Ventura county country club.

His surviving widow, the former Ella Peters, was married to Mr. Gabbert in 1879 in Iowa. He is survived also by a younger sister, Mrs. E.H. Foster of Sioux City, Iowa, and by six sons, Myron H. Gabbert of Ventura, J.R. Gabbert of Riverside, Judge Boyd E. Gabbert of Ojai, Harry Gabbert of Berkeley, and Dr. Thomas A. Gabbert of San Francisco, and Clarence Gabbert of Ventura.

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Retained Leadership

The surviving grandchildren are Walker Gabbert of Los Angeles, Mrs. Walter Marriott of Ventura, Howard Gabbert of Ventura, James Gabbert of Ventura, John G. Gabbert of Riverside, Mrs. Jane Sanders of Conway, Ark., and Peggy Marion and Jean Gabbert of Berkeley. He is survived by seven great grandchildren.

Funeral arrangements have not been completed. In spite of the fact that illness kept him close within his home since his retirement from public life, Mr. Gabbert maintained to within hours of his death a close and personal interest in the affairs of the community and the county, discussing matters in detail with frequent visitors who called on him for advice and guidance.

44. This was not the home that Tom Gabbert built in 1909, but a smaller, "retirement" home that he and Ella bought after their children were all gone.

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Interested parties may become members of the Ventura County Museum of History & Art by donating to the Annual Fund at a level of \$35 or more; businesses, \$150. The Society is a California non-profit corporation [501(c)(3)]. For further details regarding benefits, please contact the Museum at 100 East Main Street, Ventura, California 93001; (805) 653-0323.

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Questions concerning matters of style should be resolved by referring to the *University of Chicago Press Manual of Style* (13th edition). While articles in any form or style may be considered for publication (articles on computer disks are especially welcome), the Quarterly Advisory Committee reserves the right to return accepted manuscripts for necessary changes. Manuscripts submitted for consideration must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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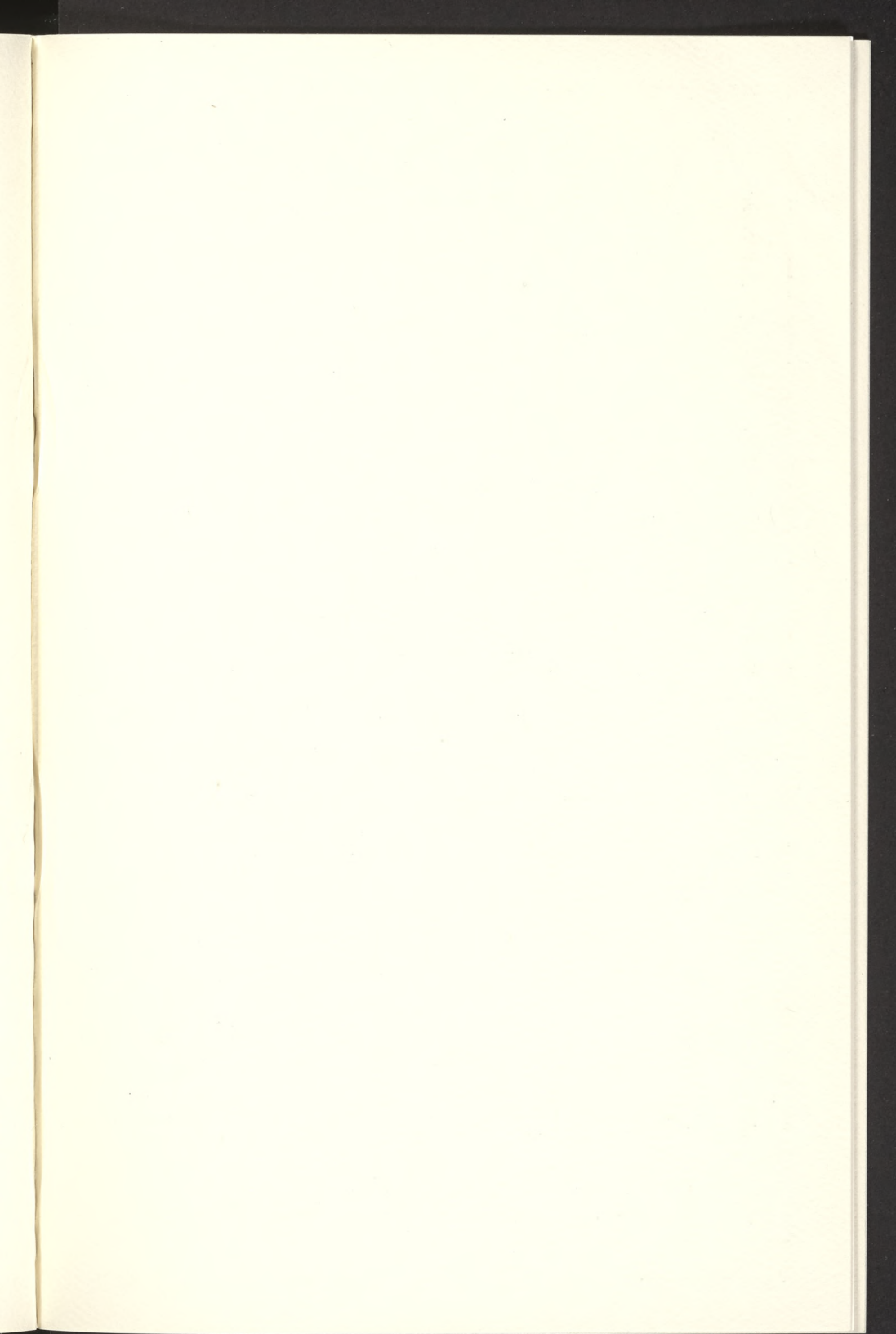
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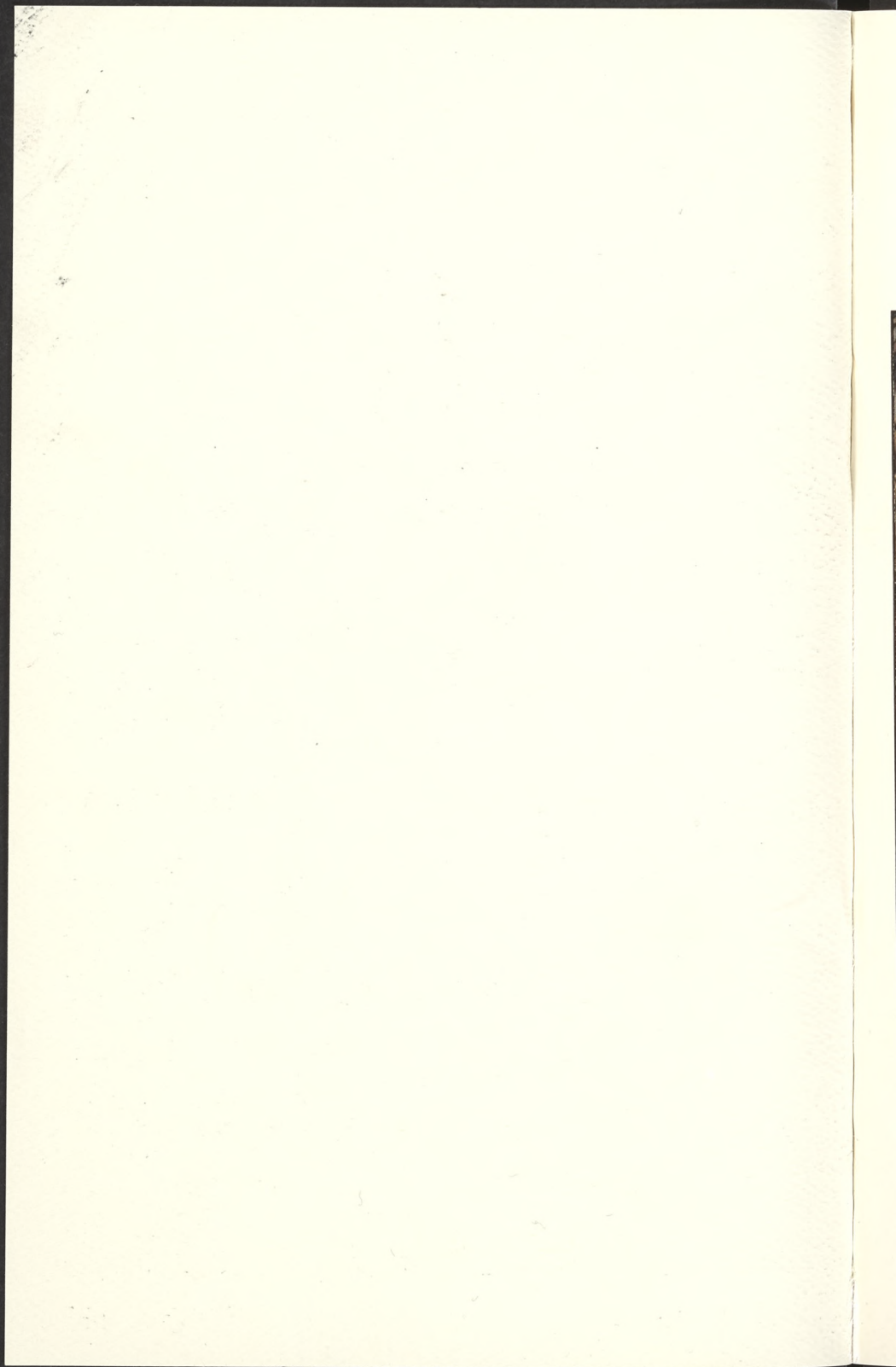
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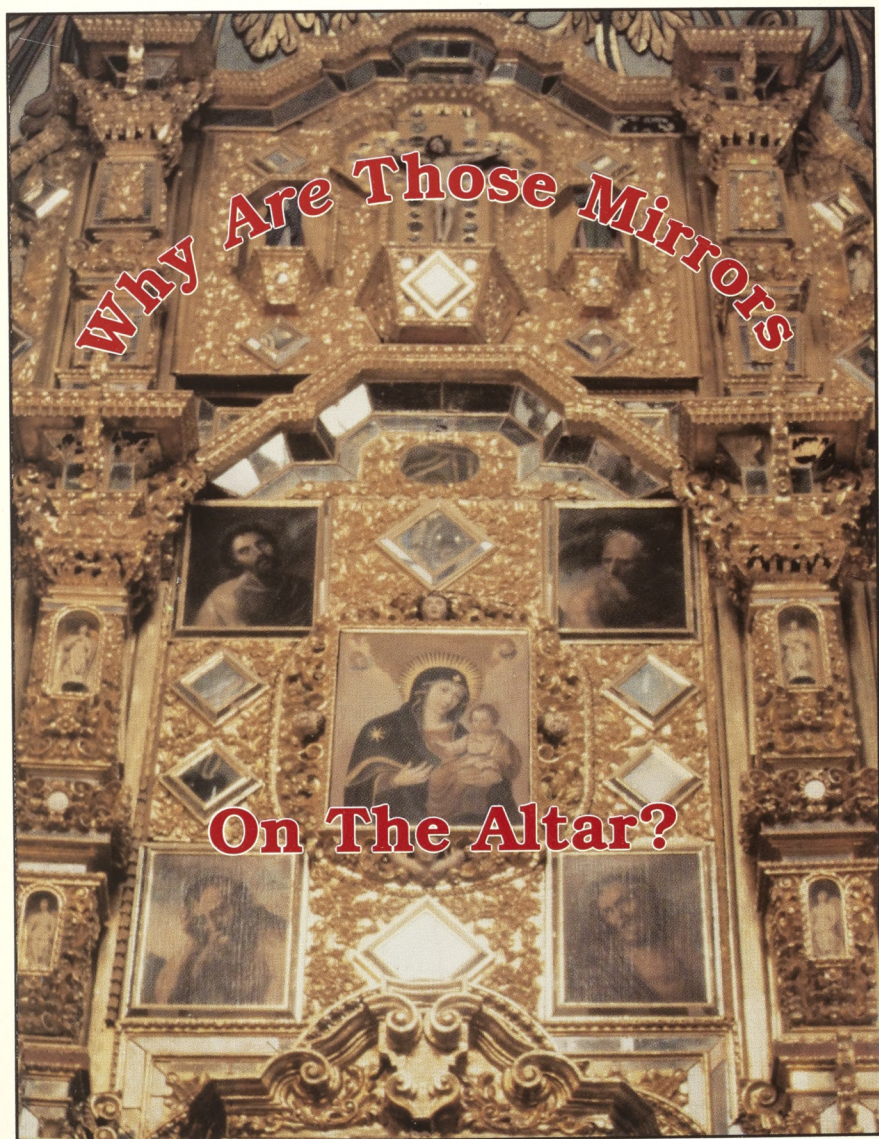
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THE
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Why *Are* Those Mirrors on the Altar?

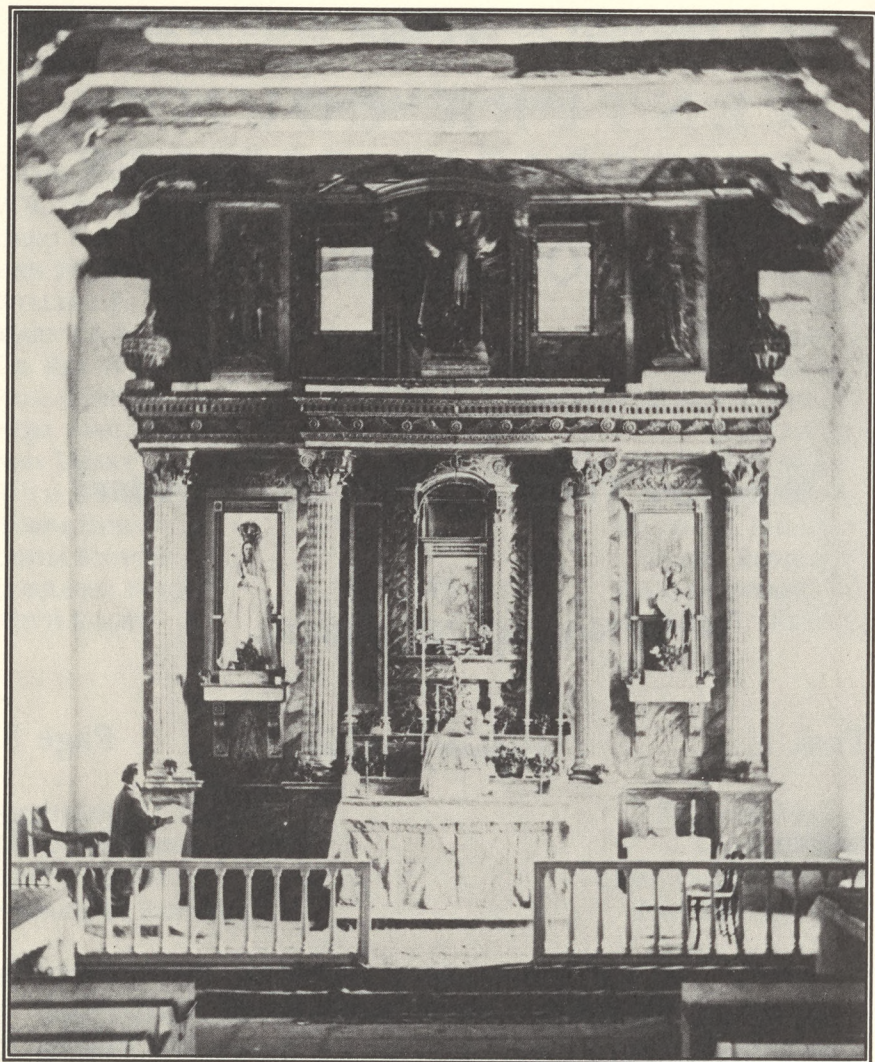
by

NORMAN NEUERBURG

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Front cover: Detail of reredos inset with mirrors in the House Chapel of the former Jesuit seminary of Tepotzotlán. **Back cover:** Painting from a series of mestizajes (castes) showing three mirrors in an interior. All photographs, unless otherwise noted, are courtesy of the author.



Interior of Mission San Buenaventura, ca. 1875, photograph by Calvin Brewster. Two mirrors on the lower level are behind the statues of the Virgin and Saint Joseph, while two smaller mirrors are on the upper level at either side of Saint Bonaventure. The mirrors are not currently on view in the small museum of the mission, but were displayed in the old museum two decades ago. They are, presumably, now in storage.

Why *Are* Those Mirrors on the Altar?

by
NORMAN NEUERBURG

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH of Mission San Buenaventura taken by Calvin Brewster in the 1870s (before remodeling) show four large framed mirrors on the great altarpiece (frontispiece).¹ Why are they there? Is this arrangement unique among California mission churches? What was the function and frequency of mirrors in Hispanic California? And, finally, was California unique in what we shall see is something of a fascination for mirrors?

EARLY OBSERVATIONS

Concerning the mirrors on the altar of San Buenaventura, Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt remarked, rather scathingly,

In 1823 the main altar was adorned (?) with ten magnificent mirrors. Of what use these very expensive mirrors in gilded frames of metal or wood were inside a church it is hard to understand; but the foolish custom of decorating (?) the sanctuaries with them was common in Mexico, as we have personally observed. The people appear to have been pleased with them, and from there they were shipped to California.²

Fr. Engelhardt's bafflement was shared by others. H.M.T. Powell, while on his way to California by way of the Sante Fe Trail, stopped in Galisteo, New Mexico, and noted in his diary,

The Church is a small adobe building with some miserable ornaments; little looking glasses and 2 large looking-glasses, 1 each side of the altar, but all so high as to be of no use.³

During a stay in California in 1851-56, Edward David Townsend remarked on the use of mirrors in three Spanish period churches. Writing of the Chapel of the Royal Presidio in Monterey he observes,

The altar trimmings and pictures are very cheap, common and tawdry. Two or three large yankee looking glasses, with mahogany frames, are suspended high above the altar - for what purpose it would be hard to divine.

Of his visit to the mission at Santa Barbara he writes, "...the Church. The inside is decorated with tawdry ornaments and pictures, as well as looking glasses, like those we saw at Monterey..." At Mission San Gabriel he noted that, "The Yankee looking glasses were conspicuous in the altar trimmings."⁴ In his catalogue of the painting and sculpture of Mission Santa Barbara, Kurt Baer described the original mission-made tabernacle (fig. 1),

On each side of the tabernacle door are pieces of mirror set into the wood. Their purpose seems to have been to reflect more light from the altar candles, and also to allow the officiating priest the better to watch the sometimes restless flock behind him.⁵

The first comment is correct, but the latter is surely wrong. Firstly, these mirrors would be quite ineffective—as they are set at angle, and secondly, it is doubtful that a priest would want to be distracted from carrying out the most sacred rite of the Mass. Furthermore, the comportment of the congregation would have been looked after by specially chosen Indian proctors.

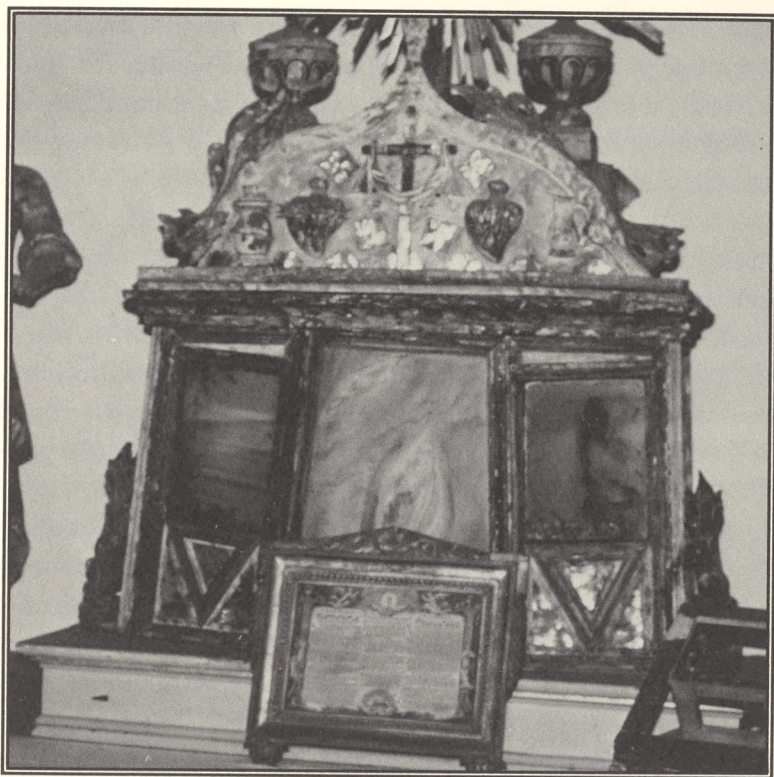


Figure 1. Original tabernacle of Mission Santa Barbara.

LIGHT, GLITTER AND MAGIC

The mirrors were, in fact, used primarily to multiply the light within the church and to add an element of glitter and even magic to the poorly illuminated interiors. Just by calling them looking-glasses, rather than mirrors, the Yankee visitors showed their lack of understanding. Of course, on occasion mirrors at the missions did serve as looking glasses, especially in sacristies and in the padre's cell, since the Franciscans did not wear beards in early California. The earliest reference to mirrors appears in an account

book of 1777 for Mission San Diego where we find two mirrors, one an *espejo para afeitar*, a shaving mirror,⁶ the other an *un espejo de los tercias*, a mirror two thirds of a *vara* high (about 22 inches).⁷ The 1783 inventory describes this second mirror as having a very fine gilded frame.

There are numerous references to mirrors in mission documents such as *informes* (annual reports), invoices of objects shipped, requests for desired objects, and inventories, most of which date to the time of secularization or the years following.⁸ None of these categories has completely survived, but we can learn much from what they tell us. The inventories, in particular, tell us where they were used. It is probable, especially in the later inventories, that mirrors were put into storage when the pastors were no longer Spanish or Mexican. The overwhelming majority of mirrors were for placement in the church. Many were hung on the walls surrounding the altar or on the reredos (altar screen), as at San Buenaventura. Many were combined with candle sconces (screens that often served as reflectors) and placed near the various Stations of the Cross. Occasionally they were hung in baptisteries, simply for decoration.⁹ In the sacristy they did serve as looking glasses for the priests as they put on their vestments,¹⁰ though small ones could have just been decoration, as they apparently were in the padres' residence.

THE LANGUAGE OF MIRRORS

Most mirrors were, presumably, simply rectangular. They were described as being *chicos* (small), *medianos* (mid-size), *grandes* (large), or even *grandecitos* (largish). They are also described as *medio cuerpo* (half length) or *grande como de un Estado* (about the height of a man).¹¹ Dimensions are given as a third, a half, or three quarters of a *vara* or a *vara* and a third. They had *marcos dorados* (gilded frames) or frames of *madera fina* (fine wood) or *pintado al oleo*

(painted oil on wood). Some were more elaborate (*laboreados*) or had a *remate* or *penache* (crest on top).

There were also special types of mirrors. *Cornucopias* were mirrored sconces, often with elaborate gilded frames (judging from numerous Spanish examples). Serving the same purpose were *réverberos* (convex sconces), made up of small squares of mirror in a tin frame.¹² A *tocador* was a small dressing table mirror.¹³ A sort of mirrored object of more difficult definition is the *pantalla*.¹⁴ No sure examples have survived in California from the mission period, but the word means a sort of screen to deflect light. Nonetheless, they were not rare in early California, a dozen having been ordered for the officers at the Monterey presidio.¹⁵ A niche on the altar of the first church at Mission Dolores had a frame of mirrors¹⁶ and the three niches on the altar of the church at the second site of La Purísima were lined with mirrors.¹⁷

SOURCES

The principal source of mirrors is not clear, though Captain George Vancouver gave pairs of small mirrors to the missions of San Francisco¹⁸ (Dolores) and Santa Clara,¹⁹ while most, if not all, of the mirrors at Mission San José were gotten by trade from the Russians of Fort Ross.²⁰ Many of the rest must have come from the Yankee trading ships.

Except for the mirrors once on the altarpiece at San Buenaventura, none of the other surviving mirrors in the missions can be tied to existing documents. As indicated, however, the documents are by no means complete and give no reason to reject these pieces as being original to the missions. Probably the oldest, and certainly the finest, examples are the pair of mirrors still hanging on the ends of the reredos at Mission San Juan Bautista (fig. 2). These are bull's-eye mirrors of a sort known as *girandoles*.

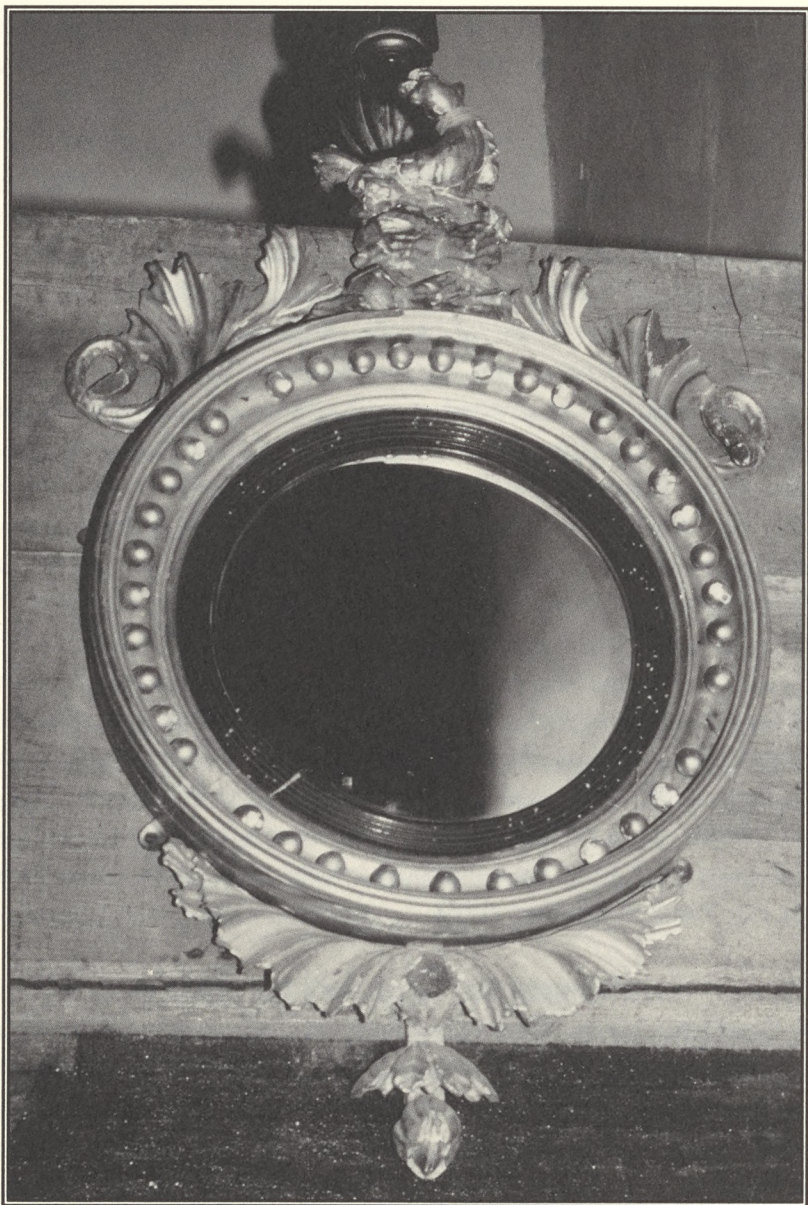


Figure 2. Bull's-eye mirror on the reredos of Mission San Juan Bautista, one of a pair.

They no longer have their candle sconces, if they ever had them.²¹ This type first appeared in England at the end of the 18th Century,²² became popular in the United States, and was usually topped by an eagle.²³ It is often difficult to be sure whether these mirrors are English or American since the model was followed so closely in this country. In England one occasionally finds marine motifs and seahorses topping these mirrors, thus suggesting an English source. Another circular bull's-eye mirror has hung in the sacristy at Mission San Gabriel for many years (fig. 3). It has a simpler gilded frame of multiple moldings.

The mirrors that were on the altarpiece at San Buenaventura are of a different type, with a design of English origin (fig. 4). They are tall rectangles, sometimes with a panel at the top, and are strongly architectural in character.²⁴ Frequently they are referred to as tabernacle mirrors. Early examples display a type of thin classical columns, but later versions present more elegant lathe-turned motifs.²⁵ These mirrors are usually defined as being Empire in style, and the California examples belong to this period from 1810 to 1840. Typically, there are rosettes in the corners flanking the top elements. The San Buenaventura frames are of this sort, as is the mirror frame in the sacristy of Mission San Gabriel (fig. 5). Another version is less architectural with lathe-turned motifs on all four sides and rosettes in the four corners.²⁶ A fine example at San Juan Bautista has a carved panel above with a rose branch (fig. 6). Another frame, located at Santa Clara and no longer used for a mirror, has applied gesso ornament on the turnings (fig. 7).



Figure 3. Bull's-eye mirror at Mission San Gabriel

CANDLE-SCONCES: A MULTIPLICATION OF LIGHT

Both reverberos and cornucopias were types of candle-sconces. At least two original reverberos have survived, one at Mission Santa Barbara (figs. 8,9), and one at Mission San Fernando. The convex surface is filled with pieces of mirror which reflect and multiply the flame of the candle. The two examples are probably trade items acquired from Yankee ships. A Mexican example from the Convent of Santa Rosa de Viterbo in Querétaro (fig. 12), now

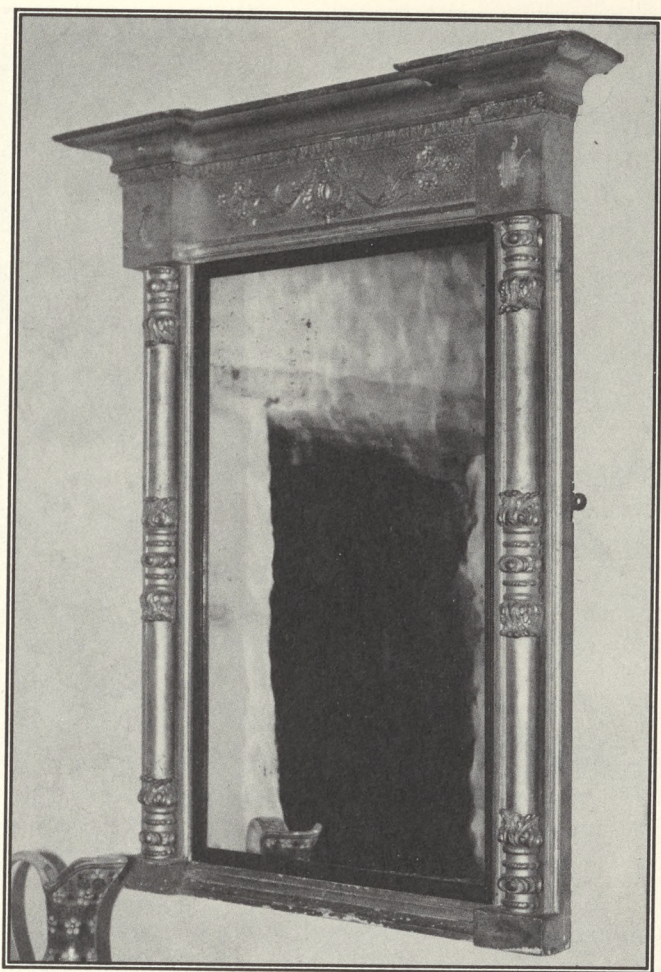


Figure 4. Mirror from Mission San Buenaventura. This does not appear to be among the mirrors in the Brewster photograph. According to the late Harry Downie it was found in the attic at the time of the 1957 restoration and was discarded onto the trash pile, where he rescued the mirror and brought it to the Carmel mission where it was put on display.

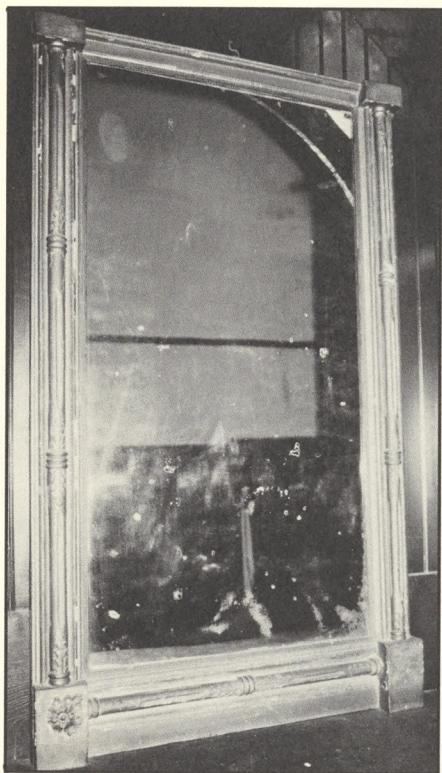


Figure 5. Mirror above the vestment chest in the sacristy of Mission San Gabriel. It is placed upside down.

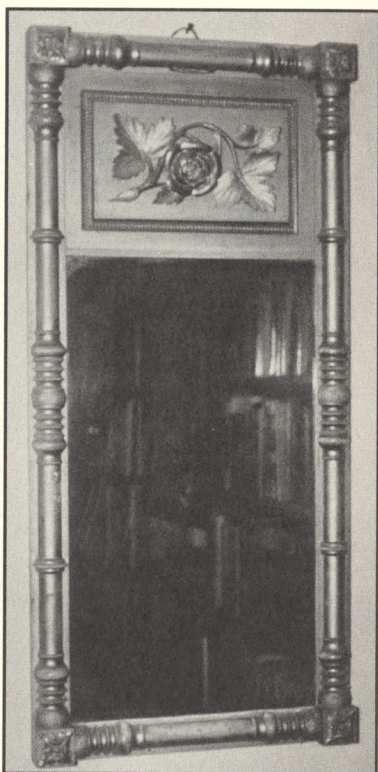


Figure 6. Tabernacle mirror at Mission San Juan Bautista.

in the collection of the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles, has fewer pieces of mirror; examples coming to California in the Spanish period could well be of this sort.

No cornucopias appear to have survived, but what probably are painted imitations of such were once painted on the walls of the chapel at the Asistencia of San Antonio de Pala. On the side wall of the sanctuary was a curious motif of a very vertical rectangle surrounded by an elaborate frame (fig. 10) which must represent

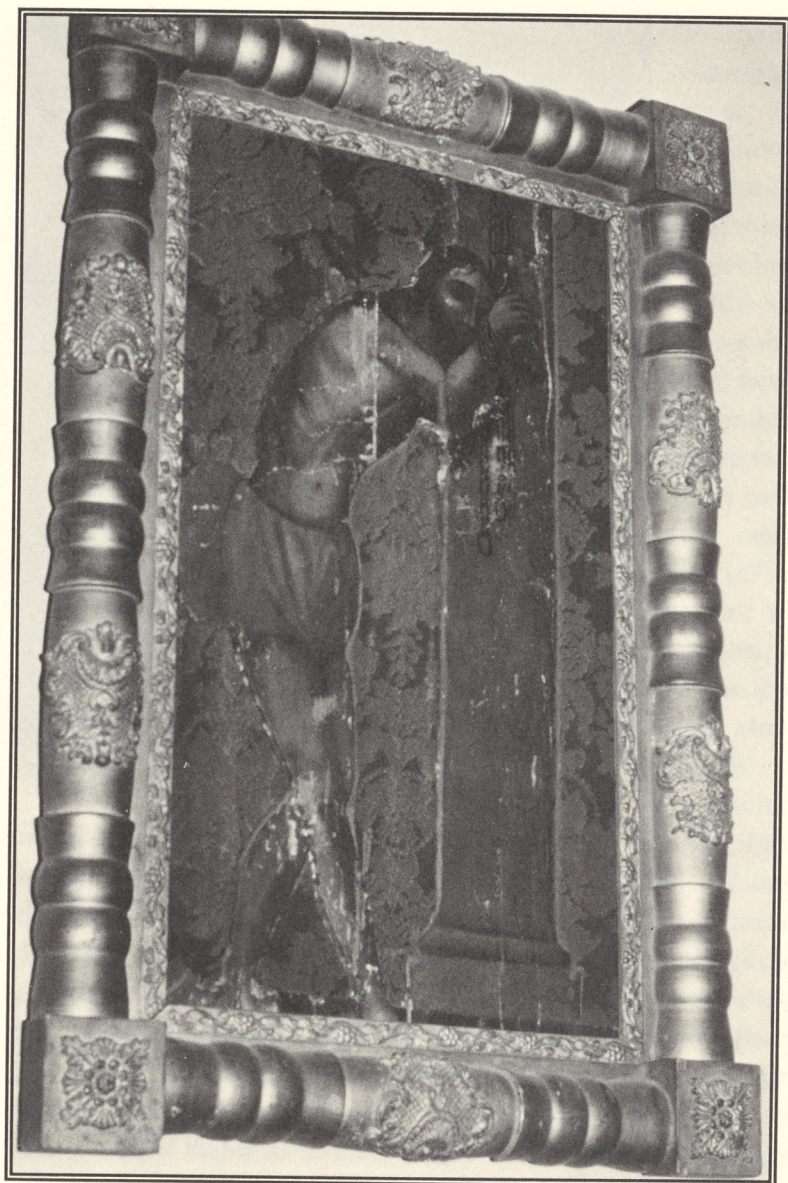


Figure 7. Tabernacle mirror frame now used to hold a cut-out figure of Christ at the Column in a side chapel in the church of Mission Santa Clara.

a sort of framed mirror not unlike one in the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas in Madrid (fig. 11). A pair of equally blank frames on the altar wall may also represent framed mirrors (fig. 13). Most

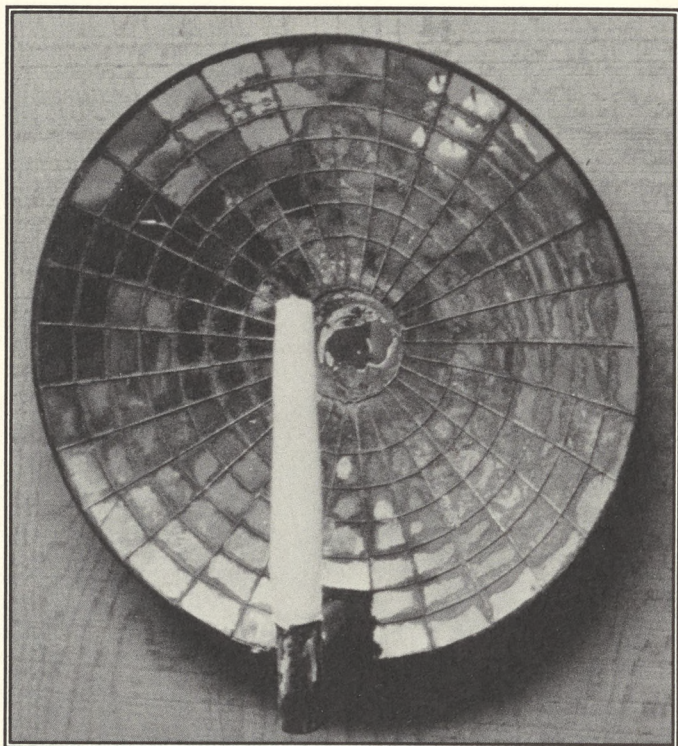


Figure 8. A *revérbero* displayed at Mission Santa Barbara.

fascinating,

though, is a curious motif that appeared beneath the painted arches on the back and side walls (fig. 14). It has long baffled visitors, and it is mis-restored today as a face with a headdress. Actually, it probably represents a reverbero with short brush strokes representing the reflection of flickering candle flames. The vaguely triangular shape beneath the circle resembles the lower part of the Querétaran piece (fig. 12).

MIRRORS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

We have seen abundant evidence for the use of mirrors in the California missions, but it will be worthwhile to see how they fit into the context of the time. The reflective surface of a calm body

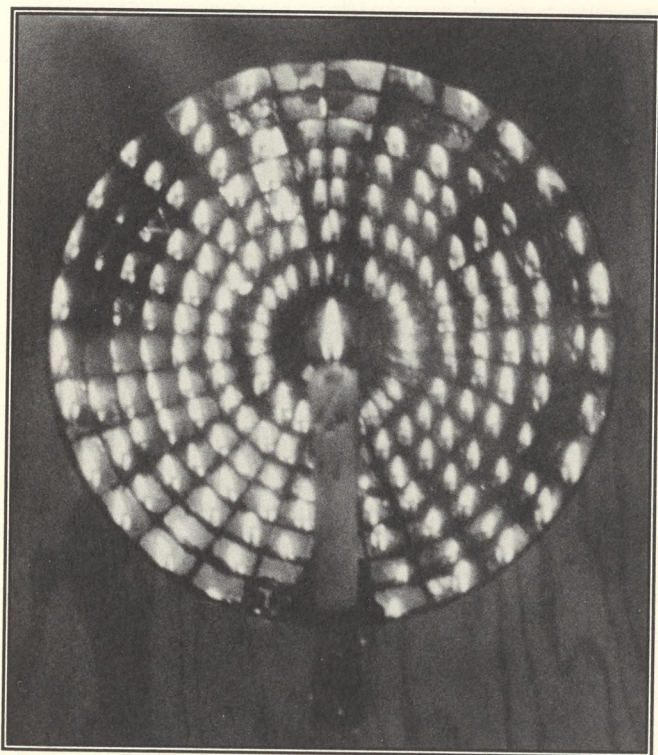


Figure 9. The same with a lighted candle.

of water is the prototypical mirror, but it was not always available and at some point the portable mirror was developed, perhaps using a highly polished stone or a smooth piece of metal.²⁷ Examples of these types of reflective pieces were known in ancient Egypt and

China, but it was not until the early Renaissance that someone conceived of the idea of backing glass or rock crystal with sheets of silver. This practice probably originated in Venice, an early center of glass and mirror production. Until the development of plate glass in the 16th century, mirrors remained small and were essentially looking glasses. Even when larger sheets of glass became available, the considerable expense limited their use to the aristocracy and the very wealthy. Those who could afford them acquired many mirrors, which frequently became elements in decorative schemes. Often they were used as the equivalent of paintings, and eventually whole rooms in palaces were sheathed in mirrors.²⁸ In areas under Spanish rule, such mirrored rooms



Figure 10. Detail of wall painting representing a framed mirror in the chancel of the chapel of the Asistencia of San Antonio de Pala. (Photograph: detail of Pierce 6208, CHS/TICOR)

could be found in churches such as the *camarín* of the Dominican church in Granada.²⁹ It is not clear when mirrors were first used in Spanish churches, but such details were common in the 18th century. Even today, especially in Andalusia, it is not unusual to see mirrors inset into the decoration of church

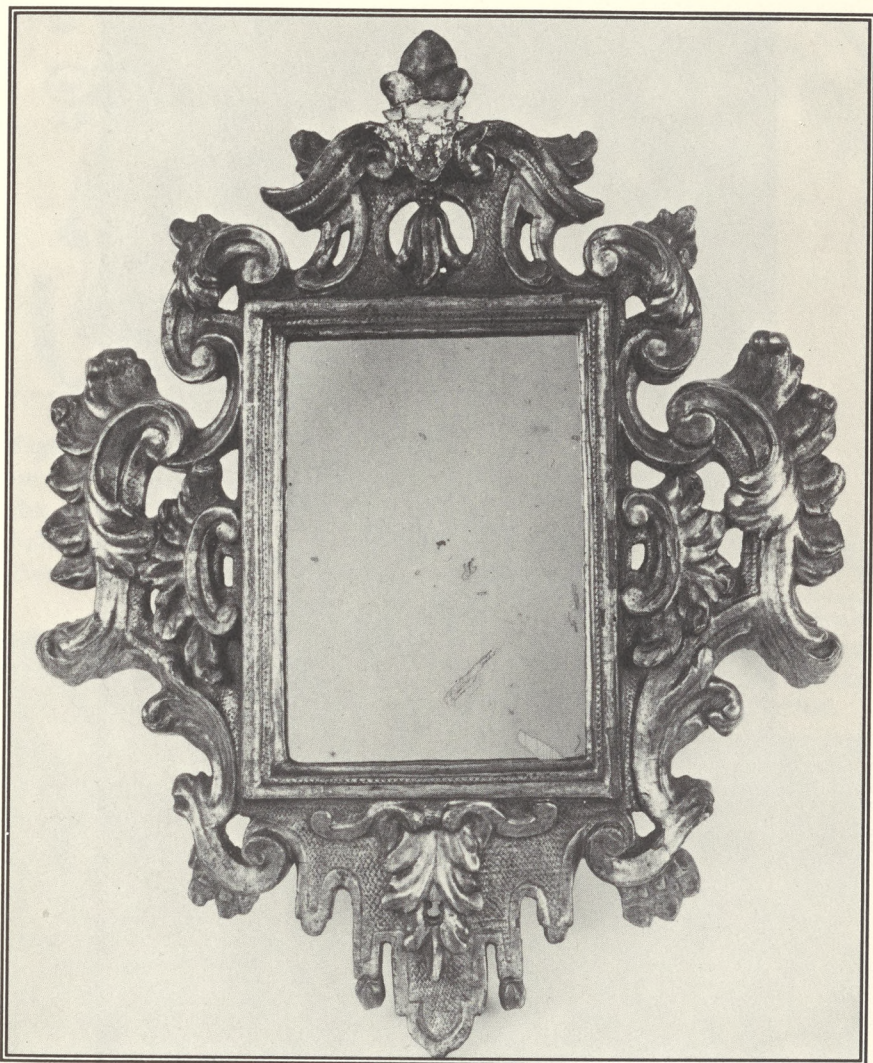


Figure 11. Cornucopia in the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas, Madrid (Photograph: Museum)

interiors and cornucopias are frequently seen (fig. 15). Glass and mirror production reached a high level in Spain after the founding of the Royal Glass Factory at La Granja de San Ildefonso.³⁰

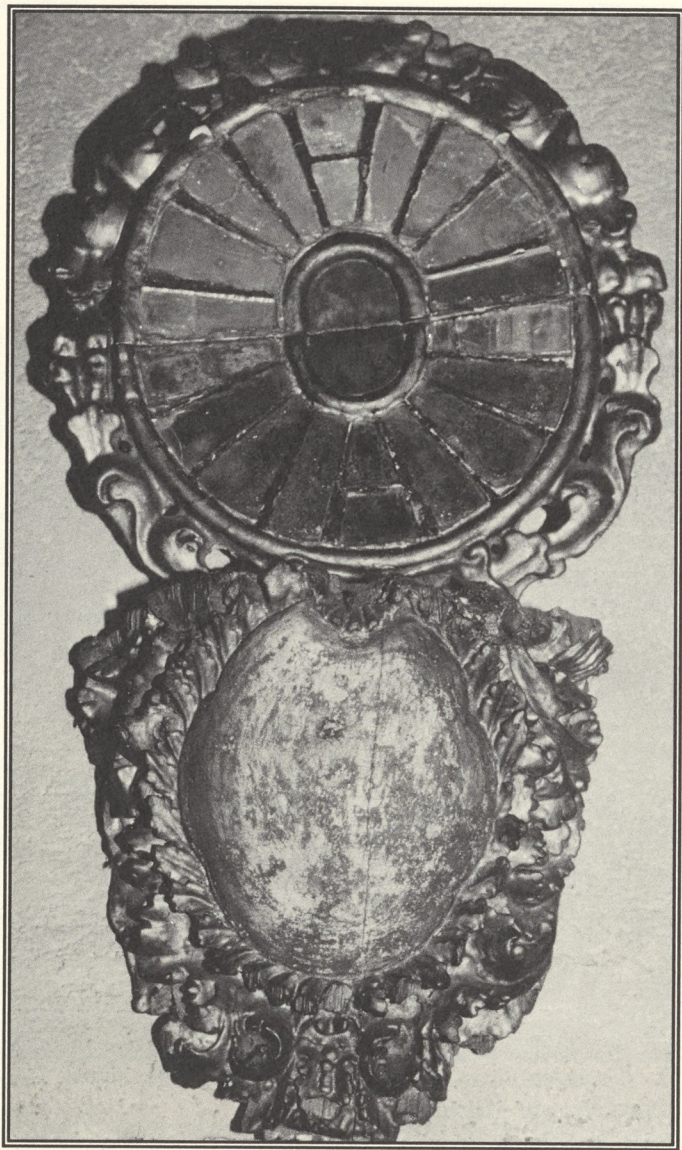


Figure 12. A *revérbero* from the Convent of Santa Rosa de Viterbo in Querétaro, Collections of the Southwest Museum, Los Angeles.



Figure 13. Painted mirror frame on the altar wall of the chapel of the Asistencia of San Antonio de Pala. (Photograph: detail of Pierce 6206, CHS/TICOR)



Figure 15. Cornucopia in the chapel of San Miguel in the Cathedral of Granada.

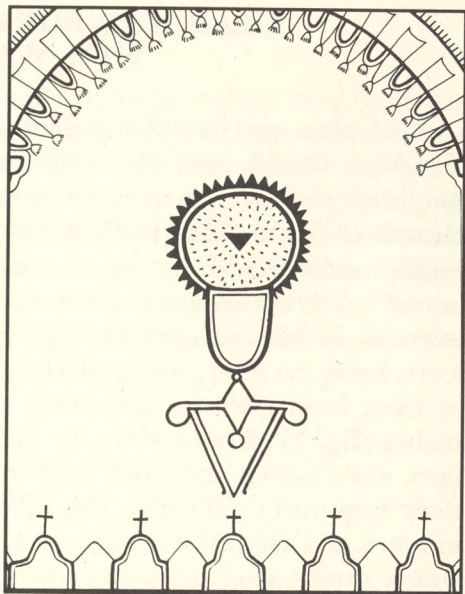


Figure 14. Asistencia of San Antonio de Pala, detail of nave decorations in the chapel with representation of a *reverbero* in the center.

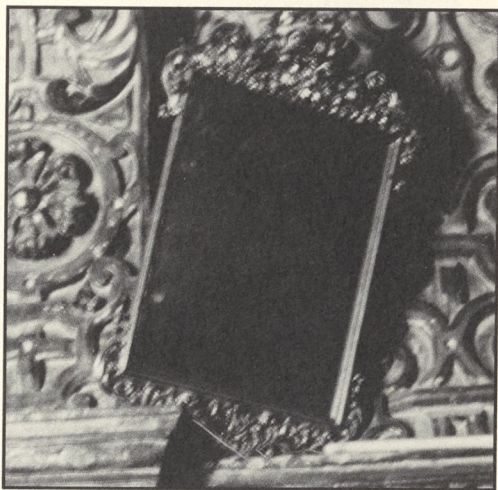


Figure 16. Mirror on cornice of nave of Chapel of Santo Cristo, Tlacolula.

GLASS AND MIRRORS IN THE NEW WORLD

Both glass and its use as a decorative element were exported to the New World, and Peru was where the fashion reached its height. Perhaps the most spectacular manifestation of this is in the church of Santa Clara in Cuzco where carved gilded altars were totally covered with sheets of mirrors forming enormous *réverbères*!³¹ Picture frames were also inset with small pieces of mirrors. In Mexico mirrors of all sorts, often in fanciful frames,³² were hung on altarpieces, placed on walls or cornices³³ (fig. 16), or even inset into the structures of the altar screens or around niches (fig. 17, front cover). In the 18th century, crystal chandeliers were being imported from royal factories and even found their way into California. The effect of candles reflected into the mirrors and from the crystal drops must have been magical and was a major part of the spectacle with which the missionaries hoped to impress their new converts to Christianity; it is a spectacle in which we can still take delight.

Even in Spain, Mexico and California, the use of mirrors was not by any means limited to churches. As noted, there were references to mirrors in sacristies used as looking glasses, as well as an early mention of a shaving mirror, which must not have been unique. At Mission Santa Cruz, inventories record the use of mirrors in other contexts. There were six small mirrors in the *sala* and five in the padre's bedroom.³⁴ Among the modest furnishings of the missions' Rancho del Refugio were four small mirrors with frames of fine wood.³⁵ These were simply a favored type of decoration, rather than an excessive vanity, as proved by two paintings of *mestizaje* now in Chapultepec Castle in Mexico City. One painting shows a pair of cornucopias flanking a framed print on a wall behind a couple playing a board game (fig. 18), while the other shows three rectangular mirrors with elaborate crests in a room where the husband is fixing his wife's hair (back cover).

THIS ARTICLE BEGAN BY ASKING SEVERAL QUESTIONS, and has succeeded in answering some of them. Obviously, much on the subject remains to be investigated, but we have discovered more than anyone might have imagined could be known. Although scarcely a major theme in the life of early California, there were more mirrors than one might have suspected. Principally, another piece has been added to the puzzle that brings us closer to the California of a century and half ago, and that in itself makes the investigation worthwhile.



Figure 18. Painting from a series of *mestizajes* (castes) showing a pair of cornucopias, Museo Nacional de Historia, Mexico City.

NOTES

Abbreviations

AGN	<i>Archivo General de la Nación</i> , Mexico City
SBMAL	Santa Barbara Mission Archives Library
VCHS	Ventura County Historical Society

1. For a discussion of the altarpiece see this author's "New Light on the Church of Mission San Buenaventura," VCHS *Quarterly*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, Summer 1983, pp. 9-19.
2. Zephyrin Engelhardt, *San Buenaventura: The Mission by the Sea* (Santa Barbara: Mission Santa Barbara, 1930), p. 59. His source is the mission's *Informe* (annual report), "*se ha adornado el altar mayor con diez magnificos espejos*," SBMAL.
3. *The Santa Fé Trail to California 1849-1852. The Journal and Drawings of H.M.T. Powell*. Edited by Douglas S. Watson (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1931), p. 75.
4. *The California Diary of General E.D. Townsend*, edited by Malcolm Edwards (n.p., The Ward Ritchie Press, 1970), pp. 98, 100, 107.
5. *Painting and Sculpture at Mission Santa Barbara* (Washington, D.C.: Academy of American Franciscan History, 1955), p. 138, fig. 89. Baer did not originate this explanation, but it is not clear how far back it goes. It guided the incorrect restoration at Mission San Fernando in 1940-41 when mirrors were placed, dressing table fashion, behind the tabernacle. These were recently removed for the installation of a new reredos composed of elements from the side altars of the Escaray Chapel collection.
6. Mission San Diego Account Book, p. 25, Bancroft Library.
7. *Op. cit.*, p. 2.

NOTES

8. Most of these are available at the SBMAL. The only missions for which there are no documents mentioning mirrors or surviving pieces are San Juan Capistrano, Santa Inés, La Soledad and San Rafael, but this lack of documentation only indicates that records have not survived to the present, not that there were never any mirrors at these four missions. There also were mirrors at all four presidios.

9. Mission Santa Barbara Inventory of 1858, s.v. Bautisterio "*a las paredes del costado dos espejos con marcos dorados al agua*," SBMAL; Mission San José Inventory of 1833 (adiciones 1833-40), s.v. Bautisterio, "*dos espejos de cerca de $\frac{3}{4}$ con marcos dorados*."

10. Mission San Luis Rey, *Libro de Patentes*, Inventory of 1844, s.v. sacrestia, "*2 Espejos de marca pa. rrevestrice [sic]; de marca* here apparently means "of exceptional quality." SBMAL.

11. Mission San Fernando, Inventory of 1849, "*cuarto Espejo Grandes como de un Estado*," SBMAL. This last term was apparently not understood at the time of the 1941 restoration.

12. Mission Santa Clara, Inventory of 1851, "*10 reverberos de cristal asogado en hoja de lata y cubos de lo mismo*." SBMAL. *Asogado* is properly spelled *azogado*.

13. Mission Santa Barbara, Inventory of 1834, "*Un tocador de madera fina*," SBMAL; Mission San José, Inventory of 1842, "*2 comodas de caoba con chapetones de metal y dos espejos de mas de media vara qe les sirve como de tocador, con sus marcos tambien de caoba. 1 Idem de la misma madera con su tocador* (in sacristy). SBMAL.

14. Mission San Luis Obispo, Inventory of 1791, "*13 Pantallas con espejos*," SBMAL; Mission Dolores, Informe of 1825, "*4 Imagenes en pantallas de cristal asogadas*," SBMAL; Mission San José, Inventory of 1837, s.v. bautisterio, "*4 espejos pantallas antiguas muy rotos y viejos*." SBMAL.

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15. Monterey Presidio, *Memoria* (request for goods), "*Para oficiales, 12 Pantallas chicas pa Sala con su mano y albortante dorados de poco costo.*" AGN.
16. Mission Dolores, *Informe* of 1782, "*sobre el tabernaculo un nicho en que está colocada la imagen de Nuestro Padre San Francisco de bulto de 7 de alto adornado el nicho con un arco de espejos.*" SBMAL.
17. Mission La Purísima Concepción, *Informe* of 1822, "*los 3 nichos del Altar mayor con espejos,*" SBMAL. A mirrored niche with an arched frame of mirrors in the Cathedral of Salamanca is illustrated in Serge Roche, Germain Courage, and Pierre Devinoy, *Mirrors* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985), figs. 257, 258.
18. Mission Dolores, *Informe* of 1792, "*2 espejos de a 2/3 con marcos dorados que dio de limosna, el Comandante Ingles Dn. Jorge Wancober.*" SBMAL.
19. Mission Santa Clara, *Informe* of 1792, "*se han añadido 2 espejos de medio cuerpo con marcos y remates de talla sobredorados. Dos dichos de a tercia con sus marcos sobredorados, que dio de limosna a la Igla el comandante Dn José Wancober.*" SBMAL.
20. Mission San José, Inventory of 1837, "*15 espejos Rusos de todos tamaños con marcos de madera fina.*" SBMAL.
21. An examination of the back shows no indication of places for attachment.
22. Roche et al., *Mirrors*, fig. 199; Geoffrey Wills, *English Looking-Glasses* (London: Country Life Limited, 1965), figs. 162-164.
23. Celia Jackson Otto, *American Furniture of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Castle Books, 1965), fig. 39; Jonathan L. Fairbanks, Elizabeth Bidwell Bates, *American Furniture 1620 to the Present* (New York: Richard Marek Publishers, 1981), p. 245; Edgar G. Miller, Jr., *American Antique Furniture*, Vol. II (New York: Dover

NOTES

Publications, 1966 [reprint of 1937 ed.]), figs. 1239, 1245; William C. Ketchum, Jr., *Chests, Cupboards, Desks & Other Pieces*. Series title, *The Knopf Collector's Guides to American Antiques* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982), p. 189.

24. Wills, fig. 159; Miller, figs. 1162-73, 1178-95.
25. Miller, figs. 1201-1203.
26. Miller, figs. 1204-1206; Ketchum, p. 186; Otto, figs. 127-128.
27. The volume by Roche, et al. is an excellent survey of the topic from its beginnings.
28. The most famous of these is the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles (Roche, figs. 106-107), but the fashion actually found the greatest favor in Germany. Among the most elegant examples is the blue and silver room in the Amalienburg of Nymphenburg outside of Munich (figs. 148-151). Among the most bizarre examples is a room in the Palace of the Hermitage in Bayreuth where the walls are scattered with the most varied shapes of mirrors, some surely no more than broken scraps. In Spain mirrored rooms are found in some palaces such as the *Salon de Espejos* in the Royal Palace in Madrid (M. Lopez, *Palacio Real de Madrid* [Madrid: Editorial Patrimonio Nacional, 1976], p. 64) and the *Sala de Vestirse de la Reina* in the Palace of Aranjuez, which is lined with mirrors in an early neoclassical setting (A. Oliveras Guart, *Real Sitio de Aranjuez* [Madrid: Editorial Patrimonio Nacional, 1977], p. 60).
29. George Kubler, *Ars Hispaniae*, Vol. XIV (Madrid: Editorial Plus-Ultra, 1957), fig. 374; Antonio Bonet Correa, *Andalucía Barroca* (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1985), figs. 307, 308, pp. 212-214. An early 18th century mirrored chapel from the Monastery of San Felipe Neri in Palermo, Sicily (then under Spanish rule) is now in the National Museum in Paris (see Roche, figs. 238-240).

NOTES

30. Alice Wilson Frothingham, *Spanish Glass* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1964), pp. 17, 66, 72-73, 76.
31. Harold E. Wethey, *Colonial Architecture and Sculpture in Peru* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949), fig. 59.
32. Genaro García, Antonio Cortés, *La Arquitectura en México, Iglesias* (Mexico City: Talleres de Imprenta y Fotograbado del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, 1914), pl. 61, San Francisco Acatepec.
33. *Op. cit.*, pls. 35-37, 40-43, Chapel of Santo Cristo at Tlacolula.
34. Mission Santa Cruz, Rancho del Refugio, undated fragment, "4 Espejos chicos con sus marcos de madera fina" valued at 4 pesos. Now in University of Southern California Library, Special Collections.
35. *Loc. cit.*, "5 Espejos chicos" (in the padre's room).

Note: figure 14, page 19, courtesy of Bellerophon Books, Santa Barbara.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

NORMAN NEUERBURG is a native Californian. His interest in the California missions began over half a century ago as the result of a course taken in junior high school. While still in high school he became involved in the restoration of San Fernando mission. He received his B.A. in Ancient Greek at the University of California, Los Angeles, and his Ph.D. in the history of art at New York University with a specialty in ancient Roman architecture. During these years he often worked at San Fernando mission during the summers.

He has taught courses in many periods of the history of art at the University of California, Berkeley, Riverside, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles campuses, as well as Indiana University, the University of Southern California, and California State University, Dominguez Hills of which he is now Professor Emeritus after retiring in 1982. While teaching at CSUDH, Dr. Neuerburg originated a course on the Art of California and the Southwest.

Since retirement he has been active in the restoration of several of the California missions and the Santa Barbara Presidio, as well as other projects, both as consultant and as a "hands-on" worker. He has published extensively in the field, and he is the author of "New Light on the Church of Mission San Buenaventura," and "Saint Bonaventure, Seraphic Doctor," which appeared, respectively, in the Summer 1983 and Fall 1991 issues of the *Quarterly*.

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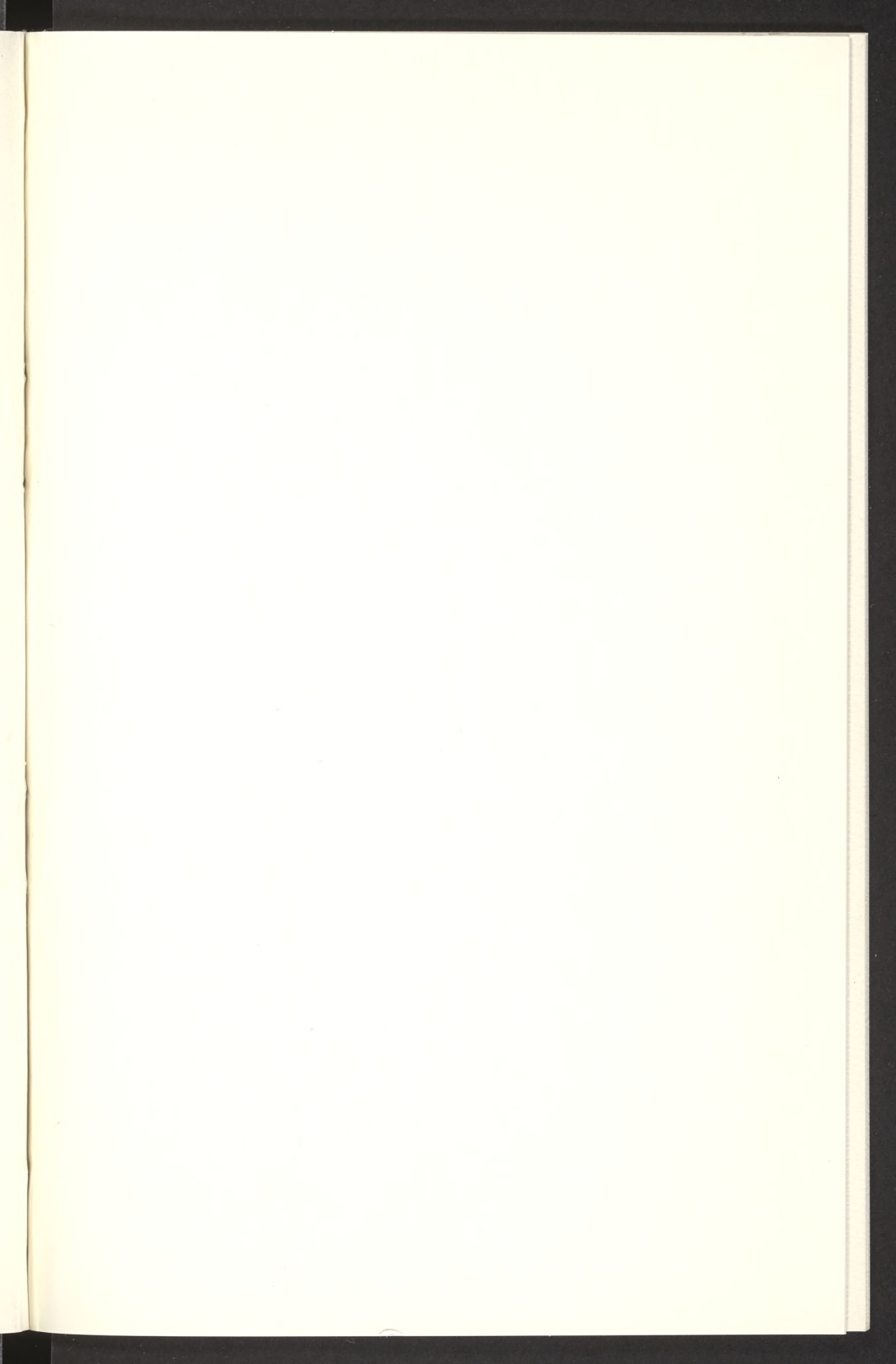
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Painting from a series of *mestizajes* (castes) showing three mirrors in an interior.

THE
VENTURA COUNTY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY

A Greenhorn at Rancho Sespe



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THE
VENTURA COUNTY
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QUARTERLY

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by

EDWARD WYMAN SPALDING

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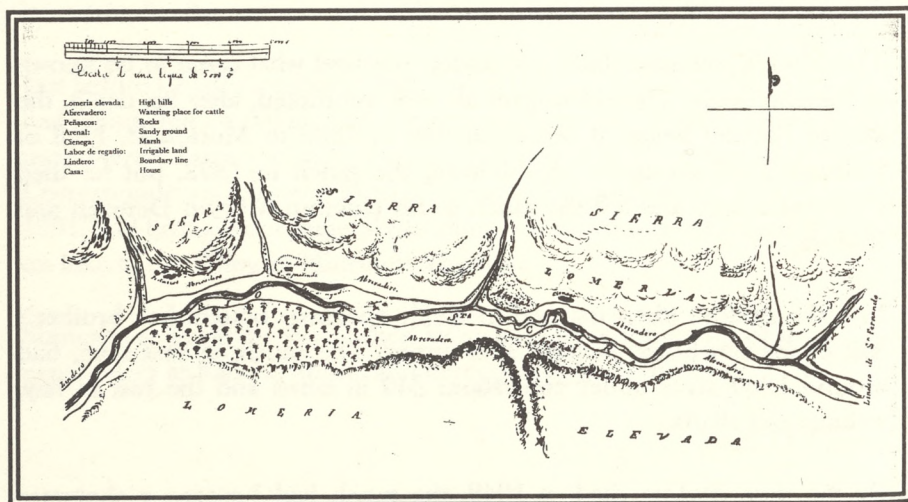
About the illustrations: all photographs in this issue of the *Quarterly*, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the author's collection of Spalding family materials. These images, taken between 1920 and 1935, are now on loan to the Fillmore Historical Museum. For an explanation of the front cover label, see page 36. Map on back cover (1938) from the Rancho Sespe Papers, also at the Fillmore Historical Museum. A special note of thanks to The Bancroft Library for permission to include the diseño of Rancho Sespe on page 4.

Eudora Spalding willed the ranch to the California Institute of Technology, with Keith, under the stipulations of the will, serving as trustee.

Keith Spalding died at his Pasadena residence in 1961. Twelve years later, the California Institute of Technology sold the ranch. In a matter of fourteen years, between 1973-1988, Rancho Sespe was sold five times: to Hillman, Prudential Insurance, Paraships, Newport Development and the Riverbend International Corporation.

In 1988, Riverbend filed for bankruptcy and, using the old 1892 subdivision plat map, began to sell Rancho Sespe parcel by parcel. By the end of 1991 all parcels had either been sold or were in escrow. Thus ended the long and remarkable history of "the Place Called Sespe."

YNEZ D. HAASE



Diseño of Rancho Sespe c1840

Courtesy The Bancroft Library, Land Case Map Collection

A GREENHORN AT RANCHO SESPE

by

Edward Wyman Spalding

A First Look at Eden

It was the summer of 1937. The old Greyhound bus trundled down Highway 126 past the sleepy village of Fillmore. On either side the sun beat down on mountains scorched yellow and white. The air simmered on the road ahead as we plunged into a corridor of tall, gaunt eucalyptus trees with strips of bark hanging like rags from their trunks. The bus pulled off the road and stopped at a one-story plaster and brick building.

"Sespe," said the driver.

I got out and looked around me. The bus drove off. A few small, recently planted acacia bushes were struggling to survive around a small crescent-shaped drive. Across the road was a small board-and-bat cottage painted a flat gray. As far as I could see, from the hills behind the office building down to the highway and beyond the cottage down to the dry river bed, were row on straight-as-a-poker row of identical orange trees, their green leaves turned yellow with a thick covering of the same yellow dust that powdered everything: office, cottage, telephone poles, eucalyptus, acacia. I looked down. Yes, even my shoes. This was the Eden I had sailed all the way around the North American continent to find.

Howard Pressey, the general manager, was in his office.¹ He was evidently not a well man; his face was florid and as his head wobbled most of the time his voice quavered unevenly.

"Wyman, we have been expecting you. Your Uncle Keith has told us you are to be one of the regular work force. We will provide you with a room in the barracks with the other ranch hands who live here, if you wish."

"That's fine," I said.

"Very well, your meals—breakfast and dinner—are served there by our cook, Mr. Hardy. You can fix a box lunch as the other men do. Have you work clothes?"



Highway 126 looking east from the Rancho Sespe office

"Yes." (My merchant seaman's dungarees, bell-bottoms of course, that I'd worn on the *Chastine Maersk* while working my way out from New York through the Panama Canal. And my jaunty white "swabby's" hat! At age nineteen how could I know how inappropriate these clothes would be on a big California ranch? Of course I would stick out like a sore thumb!)

My Uncle Keith and Aunt Eudora Spalding had no children of their own; I was the first and only member of my generation of Spaldings to show up at Rancho Sespe. No matter how I dressed, I would be an object of major curiosity.

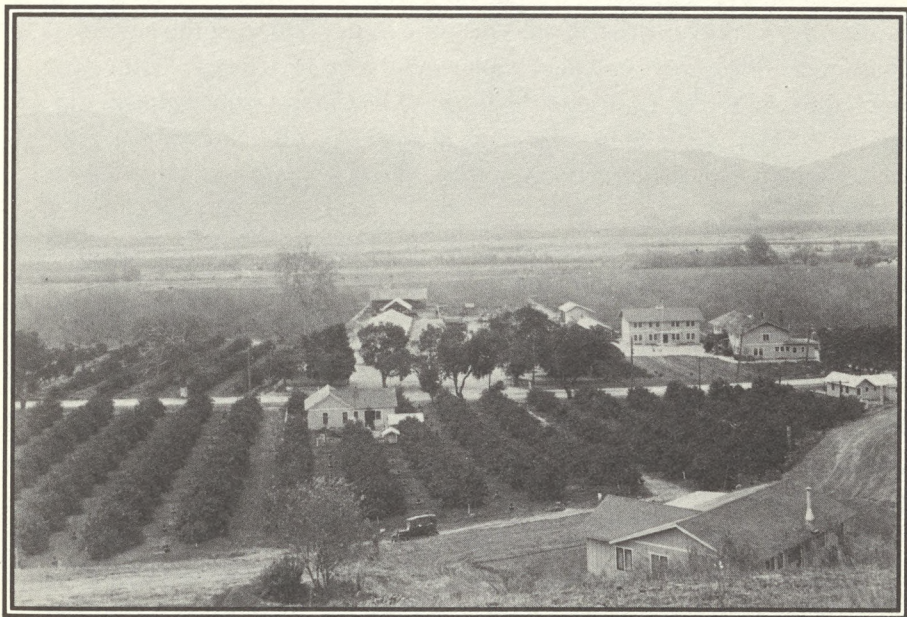
ORANGES, COAL OIL AND DUST

The barracks housed twenty or thirty hands. We had individual cubicles about ten feet deep and six wide with a door opening onto the center hallway, and a window; mine faced the yard and the mule corral. There was an army cot, a chair, a table, dresser and some hooks under a

shelf to hang clothes. The walls were about seven feet high; the space up to the rafters of the barracks roof was open. We all breathed the same air. And heard the same sounds. At least on Sundays. Each of the other men, it seemed, had his own radio, little things—we'd call them antiques now—and all through the week when we weren't at work, each of those radios would have its own music, what we'd call "country," now. It was fairly chaotic. But not on Sunday. Sunday all of those little jobs would be tuned to Aimee Semple MacPherson's "Foursquare Church," and Aimee's voice would be echoing off the rafters. Loud. Very loud.

One supper (dinner) and one breakfast was all I needed to convince me that Mr. and Mrs. Noel Hardy served the best meals anywhere in Ventura County. Then we all poured out into the yard for work assignments at about 6:45 a.m.

My first day I didn't get assigned. Mr. Allen Lombard, the assistant ranch manager, had me hop into his pickup.² He took me around the ranch on a kind of "Cook's Tour." Allen was quite a small man. He wore



Rancho Sespe ranch quarters

a brown felt hat, khaki shirt and breeches, brown leather puttees and laced boots, like the African explorers of those days. He had a squarish, dark brown, close-clipped mustache. At one point in the tour we rolled into a kind of ugly vacant place and stopped. Not far away was a rectangular wire cage. No, it was a kind of trap. It was occupied by the meanest, biggest cat I'd ever seen.

"Wild cat?" I asked.

"No, that's a feral cat. It's a domestic cat that's run away or been abandoned. People do that to their pets sometimes when they have to move on. The cats go wild and hunt and kill birds and become real tough, wild animals. Your uncle keeps the ranch as a bird refuge, so we set traps for these devils and shoot 'em when we catch 'em. Do you want to shoot this one?"

Then I noticed he'd brought along a .22. I hesitated.

"It's all right if you don't want to."

"Oh no, I'll do it."

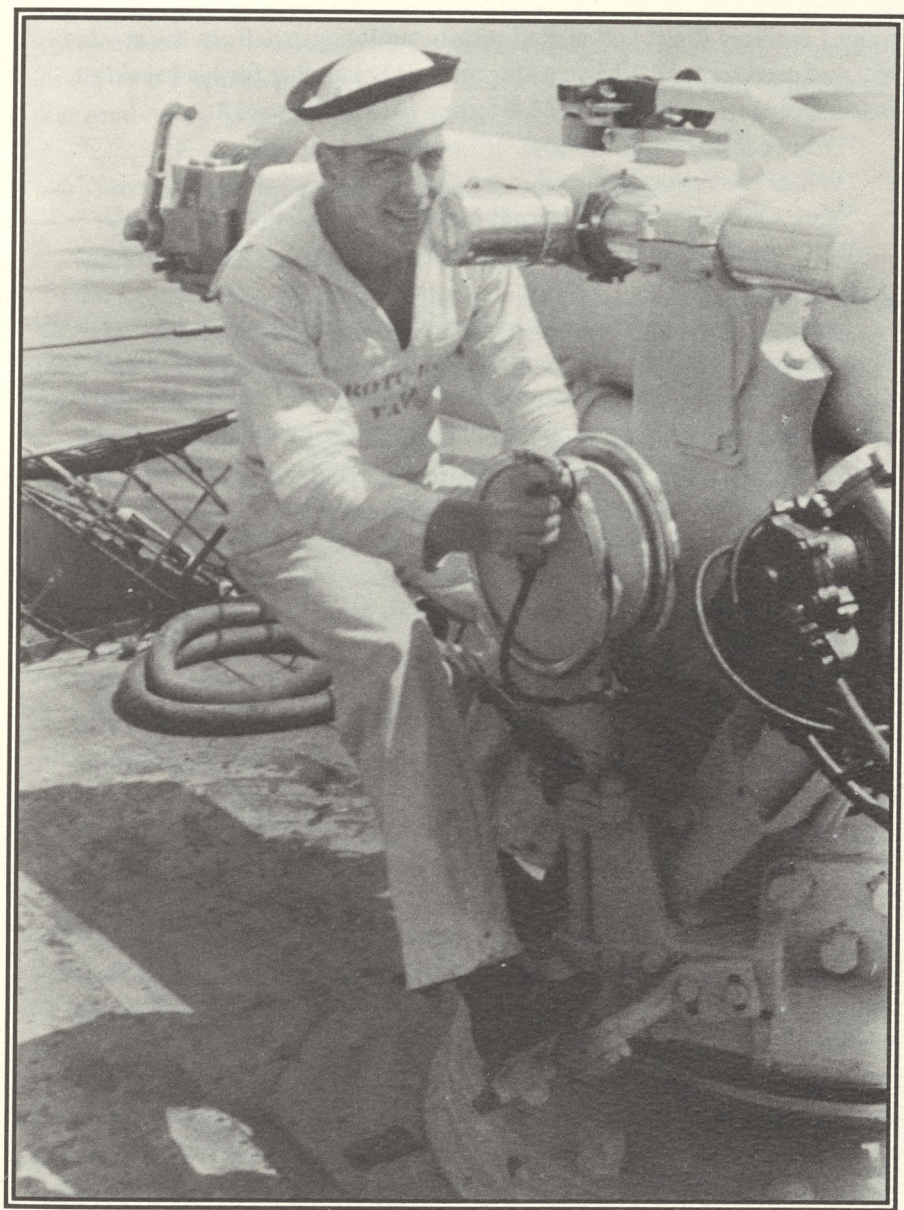
It was my first test. Could I do ranch work, just out of a year in an Eastern Ivy League college? Could I cut the mustard? I took the gun. Raising the rifle to my shoulder I took careful aim. (To myself: "Don't miss, for God's sake, or wound the thing! O.K. Careful, aim. *Squeeze* the trigger.") SMACK! (The familiar crack of a .22 Long Rifle cartridge.) The cat sprang up and clawed at the wire cage. Wow, what power! Then fell on its back twitching.

We walked over. I noticed how small Mr. Lombard was. I noticed how big that cat was. Lombard took his time opening the cage.

"You want to be careful around these animals; they can be really tough customers." He pumped another couple of shots into the dead cat.

A little farther up the road, after we'd dumped the cat into an arroyo, he showed me the Colt .45 automatic he carried in a pocket by the clutch pedal in his pickup. "I take this along, too. Some of the men here are pretty tough customers." Maybe so, but right from the start I liked the men I met and worked with at the ranch. And I'd trust them anywhere.

Mr. Lombard turned me over to the son of one of the foremen, a kid about my age who was working till school began. From him I learned what "Native Son" meant. He was one. I was not (born and raised in New York City). Not being a native son was not a good thing. For instance at one



NROTC Cadet Wyman Spalding , *U.S.S. Oscar Badger*, 4 July 1937,
six weeks before coming to Rancho Sespe

point I reached down and picked up a beautiful orange from the ground. My dad used to pay 10-15 cents for an orange like that for his breakfast, before going to his office on Wall Street. I started to peel it.

"Don't eat that," said Bobby. "It's poison."

"What? looks good to me."

"Nah. Once they hit the ground they get fungus'll kill you!"

"Oh." And I dropped the 15 cent golden beauty back down in the dust.

The next morning (6:45 a.m.) I was introduced to my boss, Ed Spraggins, the foreman. I learned later that he had been a star fullback on the Ventura Junior College football team. He stood about six feet three inches and was what I'd call "beefy." He wore a felt hat like Lombard's and clean khaki shirt and long trousers. There was something about his eyes, but he was all friendly to me that day.

"We need another spray rig driver. You do that today, Spalding."

"I don't have a driver's license." (How embarrassing!)

"That's O.K. You don't need a license to drive on a ranch."

"But I've never driven a truck."

"Just like a car."

"I've hardly driven a car. Only a few times." (When I hooked my mom's car early one morning before she got up. That was three summers ago in Stockbridge, Mass.)

If he was annoyed, he was trying hard not to show it.

"There are a couple of tricks to driving a rig. John Dunham will show you."

So I got to know my "straw boss" John Dunham. My good friend John Dunham had a kind, sort of horse face, very wrinkled, though not as much as his neck, from maybe forty-five solid years in the sun. You trusted John right off. He said, "C'mon. I'll show you."

I sat down on the wobbly seat of an old Dodge truck with no doors on its cab, and a big tank hunch-backed with a motor the size of a Model A with a pump unit attached. Double wheels in back with a platform step, like those on fire engines, where two to four sprayers stood and hung on till we reached the orchard (which were called "tracts"). John showed me how there was a "compound" gear where reverse was on Mom's Olds,

then reverse was "over there, see? Kinda hard to get into. Fer goshsakes don't try it if you're rolling forward 'less you wanta drop your gearbox in the road—way over here, see, not there!"

"Oh. O.K. I guess I've got it."

"Sure. What's your name? Whaddya call yourself?"

"Wyman."

"O.K., Wyman, you got it."

To myself I said, "These people take awful chances! But maybe it'll be all right." John Dunham seemed to think it would be. Maybe with a few people like John around I could handle the Pressey-Lombard-Spraggins crowd.

The Dodge howled and bucked a little, but I quickly calmed it down and pulled into the yard and picked up my sprayers, the Alford brothers. We got out onto the highway; they pointed to the rig way up ahead.

"Follow him. See where he's turning off?"

"Sure."

"Watch your rear wheels; they cheat!"

"Cheat?"

"They cut the corners."

"Oh. O.K."

"O.K. Here we are." Spraggins was looking on, and John Dunham was waving us to a vacant row.

"O.K. Stop between the second and third trees and we'll give you the signal when to move on."

Then these guys would jump off hauling 50-75 feet of heavy black pressure hose attached to a brass spray gun. The gun was about twenty-six inches long and had a pistol grip and a corn-cob-shaped throttle handle on it. A rumble, then a bang, and another vibration took hold of the truck and shook it. Other trucks ahead of us had started. Fingers of spray pierced the air through the leaves of the trees down a ways. Soon I could see the trees alongside my truck shaking as if they were dogs just out from a swim.

Jim Alford took his left hand off the spray gun and waved me on. I put the truck in compound gear and clutched as smoothly as I could.



"Watch your rear wheels, they cheat."

Orchard number eight showing some of the heaters.

Not bad. I looked back. John and his partner were hard at it. Their work looked like fun, but it was strenuous; you could see that. Sitting in the truck was just fine. This old Dodge lived up to its reputation. About a '29 model, no frills. Just a good, sturdy machine. I took a liking to it immediately.

After we'd done a few rows, Jim Alford came by the cab with his gun turned off.

"You want to try spraying awhile, Wyman?"

"Sure."

He showed me how to cock the spray gun over my shoulder and hold the hose across my stomach and under my armpit. When I turned it on, it throbbed like a live snake.

"Lookee here. See how you turn the leaves over?" he shouted above the hissing, pulsing din. "You gotta get both sides. If you don't, they'll get on you for it. They can guys that don't do it right. Not everybody can."

I gave it a try.

"Yeah. Now look over there. That patch. That's it! Now you've got it. O.K. I'll take over again."

I cut the flow off and handed him the gun. Damn. It was *heavy* with the pressure on. And it wanted to go its own way.

Spraggins came by later, and I could see him talking to Jim. At lunch break I asked Jim if everything was all right.

"Oh sure," he said. "I told Spraggins you'd pick up spraying real fast if he wanted to try you."

"Thanks. Where are you and your brother from?"

"Boliver."

"Where's that?"

"Missouri. 'Show me' state. You never been to Missouri?"

"Nope. Came out through the Canal. On a freighter."

"That where you come by them funny-lookin' work clothes?"

"Yep. I don't have much money. So until I get paid—anyway till I've earned some, I figure I'll get by with these—maybe wear them out before I change them."

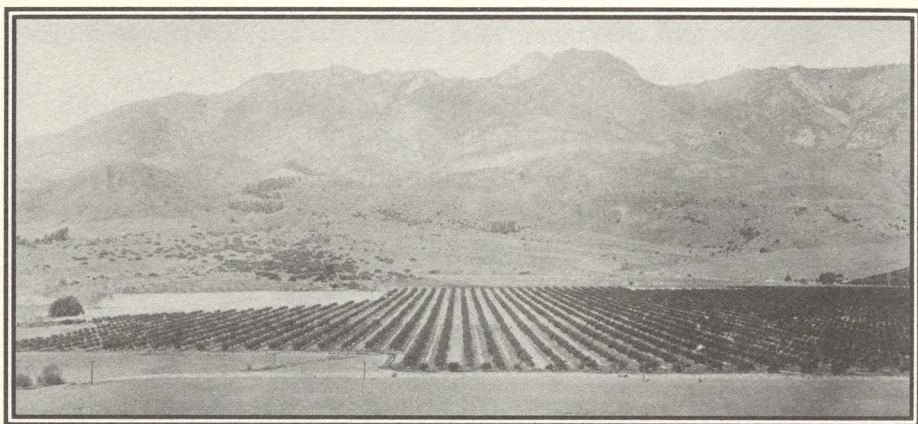
"You'd oughta git some overalls like Short's and mine," said Jim, who'd finished his lunch already, long before I could. "Do you lots better, an' a different hat. One like mine, if you gotta have one." His "like" was pronounced "lack." The Alford's Missouri drawl was soothing to the ears somehow.

The other men were sprawled around on the ground in the shade of the trees. The sun was blazing down noon-strong. There was laughter and some horseplay. Two other men from Bolivar I remember well were Bob Pauley and Lynn Holt. Bob, six foot two with blond haystack hair, Lynn six-six, rangy and kind of flat-headed, had a high, broad forehead. After a few weeks at the ranch when "the boys" had gotten to know me and accepted me in a sort of off-hand, puzzled way, Lynn said something like this to me at one of our lunch breaks: "Why don't you wrestle, kid? Afraid you'll get hurt?"

"Hell no. Just wouldn't want to hurt *you*, Lynn!"

He came over laughing, picked me up like a rag doll, held me up over his head and spun me around. "Put me down, Lynn, before I throw up on you!" I hollered, laughing. "I give up!"

"All right, 'f you say so," said Lynn, as he set me on my feet.



"Row on straight-as-poker row...." Tract number five.

Later in the fall, when the work slacked off and fumigating was over, the Alford boys, Lynn Holt and Bob Pauley stuffed themselves into the Alford's Chevy sedan and, spelling each other at the wheel, drove non-stop to Bolivar. Five days later, after almost two full days at home, they were back, exhausted and happy. They were happy, but they were sad, too. Those were the "Dustbowl Years." Farms were wiped out. Families were torn apart. Some survived; some didn't. The last thing farm people needed in the middle of a depression was that dustbowl disaster. (Riding down Riverside Drive in a school bus while I was attending prep school in New York a few years earlier, I remember looking out over the Hudson River and The Palisades. The sky to the west was brown with the topsoil of thousands of small midwestern farms, lifted by the winds to be deposited in rivulets on our bus windows a thousand miles eastward and on over the waves of the Atlantic.) Those "Dustbowl People" had strong loyalties. They stuck together. The Alfords told me, "There are more people from Bolivar in Santa Paula than there are left in Bolivar!" The "Show Me! State" had become the "Leave Me State"!

The following week I had a couple of incidents driving a spray rig. On turning into a row my right tire went crunch across a smudge pot. The coal oil in it poured out. Like lightning, men appeared from all around with shovels; lickety-split the crushed tin pot was tossed out onto the edge of the road and the oily dirt was shoveled away from the tree. John

Dunham looked worried, but he assured me that they'd caught the oil before it got to the roots of the tree.

"A busted smudge pot don't amount to nothin'," he said, "but a tree dyin', that's bad! Remember your rear wheels cheat on you."

"Whew! I'll be more careful!" I never hit another smudge pot.

A few days later, coming in from work I hit something else, though. At the end of a ten-hour workday, with the prospect of a hot shower and a full plate of Noel Hardy's great food, well, who would waste time! So off we'd go like a Roman chariot race, heading for "the yard," the boys hanging onto the back of the rigs with the coiled hoses swinging from side to side. First into the yard, first into the showers! This afternoon I got out onto Highway 126 ahead of everybody, which was great, only there'd been a road crew at work where I turned on and they'd left a sawhorse covering the hole they'd patched, with a red kerosene lantern hanging from it. My right rear tire (again!) nicked the bottom of that lantern and sent it spinning thirty, forty feet into the air! Fortunately the closest truck following us was by when it came down CRASH onto the road. Nobody hurt! (Thank God!) The next day I was put on a hose. No more driving.

Before the rains came, Bob Pauley and I were put to killing morning glory, a fast-growing vine that could get up into the trees and cause all kinds of trouble. It was an experimental project (lots of experimental work went on at the ranch all the time before Uncle Keith "traded" it to the California Institute of Technology), Bob and I were sent out to Tract 2 and 2A, bordering Route 126 on its north side. The rig was an ancient one that had been on the ranch for decades. Its tank was smaller than the one we had on the trucks, maybe 250 or 300 gallons, and it was made of wooden staves bound with heavy iron wire hoops. Its motor and pump worked, but they were kind of noisy and had a lot of exposed gears. It was mule-drawn. It had two attachments for spray hoses, and Bob and I manned one each, but Bob was the loader and tended the mechanics of the thing. When we'd filled the tank from an overhead pipe, we'd dump in about a gallon of "Pentox," an evil-smelling dark syrup of arsenate of lead and sulfuric acid manufactured by the Dow Chemical Company. Our spray guns were fitted with cone-shaped nozzle-guards which we were ordered to keep pointed down close to the plants and not more than a foot off the ground. Our nozzles were set on "fog." We had no protective

clothing. I remembered, after the first day, that soap was alkaline and would neutralize acid, and I took to carrying a bar of soap in my pocket. Every time we stopped to reload, or whenever we were near a faucet, I'd lather up my shoes and the bottoms of my jeans, and I suggested to Bob that he do likewise; I think he did. For a few days all went well. But then the first accident occurred. Bob was tightening a hose fitting at the back of the rig. I heard a POP and WHOOSH! and I looked over and there was Bob with that stuff squirting up in his face. I ran over and shut the rig down and grabbed Bob by the hand—he was blinded, of course, and we ran across to one of the foremen's cottages on the other side of 126, and I turned the faucet there full on and shoved Bob's face under it. "Open your eyes, Bob!" I hollered. "I know it'll hurt, but you've got to flush that stuff out, now!" And I prayed to myself we weren't too late.

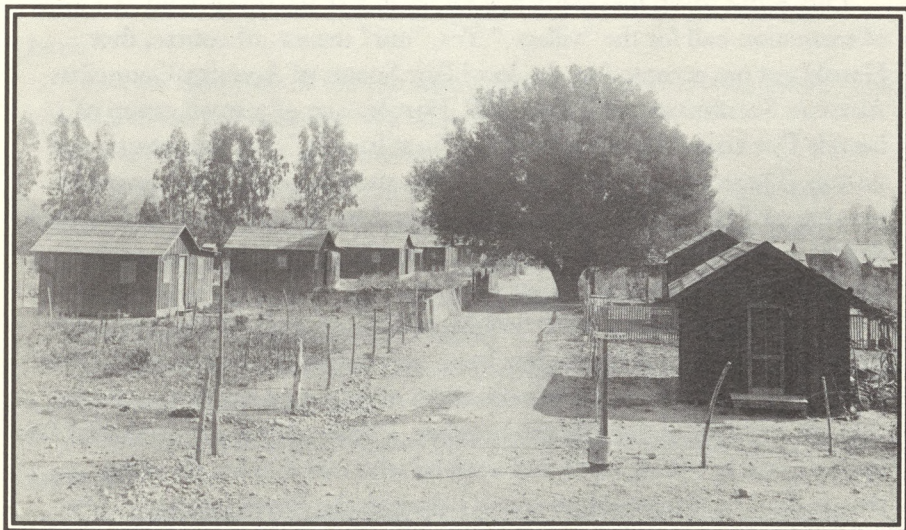
My prayer worked, I guess, and we were back out on the job the following morning. Bob's normally reddish complexion was just a little more so. But a couple of days later was the one that spelled finish to that experiment. Once again, I was off at the end of my hose dealing death to those poor little morning glories when I heard a sound I'll never in my born days forget. The rig had been getting noisier, so Bob had quit spraying, picked up a can of engine grease, and was daubing it onto the whirling gears with his gloved middle finger. When I heard that sound and his howl of pain, I turned off my gun and ran over to where Bob was standing, holding his right hand in his left with his face all screwed up in anguish. His right glove was on the ground; there was no middle finger to it. He showed me his bare right hand. Same thing! We hustled him over to the office and he was driven in to the hospital. Bob had a couple of weeks off while his hand healed in a big white bandage. (Yes, out there on Tract 2 or 2A is a part of Bob Pauley that he might have found useful for gesturing at some deserving ruffian in later years.)

Every evening after coming in off that job, I'd soaked my bell bottoms in soapy water, rinsed them, and hung them out to dry. A couple of weeks after Bob's accident shut down the operation, I looked at my old jeans—they were in tatters.

HAROLD AUSTIN

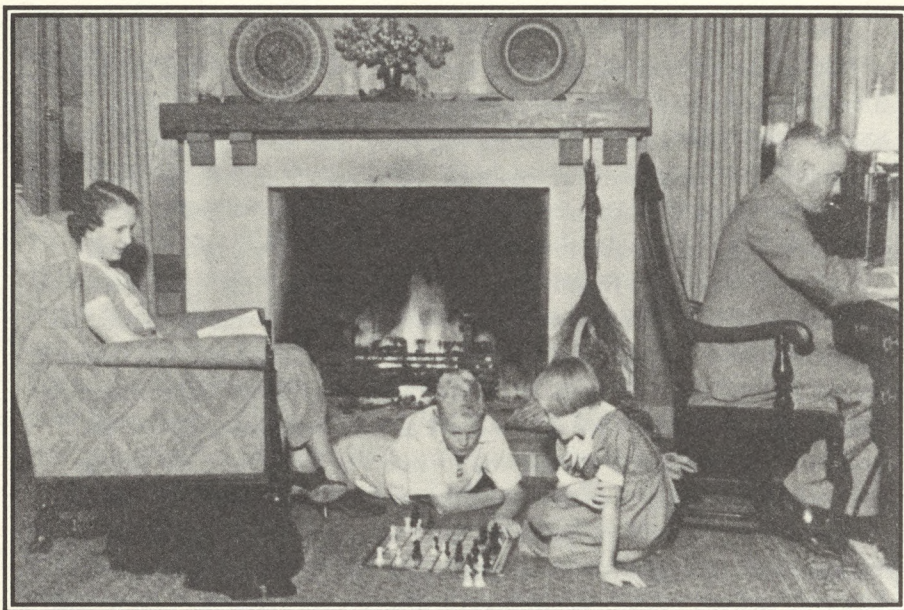
One of the men in the barracks was different from the rest. He introduced himself at breakfast one morning; said his name was Harold Austin. I don't remember where he was from, but he wasn't from Missouri. Was I interested in scouting? I'd been a "tenderfoot" once for a short time. He was scoutmaster of Sespe Troupe 302. Would I like to come to a meeting, maybe help with the boys? Yes, I thought I would.

Lyman Pressey, the ranch manager's son, was the only Anglo scout in the Sespe troupe.³ Lyman was almost white-haired, he was so blond. He sunburned easily, so his color scheme really made him a standout among the rest of the boys, who were from the "Mexican Village" (later renamed "Sespe Village"⁴), and were dark-haired and dark-skinned. Down the road from the Spraggins' cottage was a cluster of board and bat shacks that housed the families of the Spanish-speaking workers on the ranch. Their work was mainly as "pickers." They were poor—desperately poor. But they were essential to the success of the ranch. Men, women and children "picked." They also gathered walnuts later on in the fall. Many of the women used their skillful fingers to sort, wash, wax, and wrap for crating the citrus fruit that flowed through our packing house.



"They were poor—desperately poor."

A section of the Mexican quarters.



Mr. and Mrs. Pressey with Lyman and Jane in their home at Rancho Sespe

Our Scout troop met every two weeks in a shack that served as a kind of recreation hall for the "village." Yes, "our" means, of course, that Harold got me accepted by the local Boy Scouts of America Council as Assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 302. Harold, one of a small group of friends I've known that I can call my "best friends," was a most unusual person. There was an awkward slur to his speech, something caused by the shape of his mouth, I guess. He laughed easily and often, and he took delight in many things (I almost said "everything"). He was one of the most enthusiastic people I've ever known.

Several months after my arrival Mrs. Hickcox, wife of the stock foreman, told me Harold Austin had been over asking if I was all right. That did it. The mountainous disappointment of failing on my first job burst through the dam of my inherited reserve. I broke down and sobbed. I felt used up and betrayed, but I had a friend who cared, if for no other reason than he depended on me to help with the Scout troop.

At least I would not fail him or the troop. So it was Harold that put me back on my feet again and helped my head to straighten up.

It may have been the first time I was alone in "The Yard." I think it was late afternoon Sunday and the September sun was slanting through the trees. The ground was warm and the smells of the stables and the machinery and the alfalfa in the barn were strong in the nostrils. But I wasn't alone. A pretty little girl in a print dress was there, too.

"Hello."

"Well, hello!"

"You're Wyman Spalding, aren't you?"

"Yes, and you are?"

"Catherine Hickcox. My dad's the stock foreman."⁵

"You mean he's the boss of all these horses and mules?"

"Yes . . . well, no. He bosses the teamsters and the ranch hands who do the work around the barn, corral, and the pastures." And she laughed. She had a real nice laugh. Her nose wrinkled and her eyes got kind of slitty, and they twinkled. Her light brown hair was wavy and bobbed short in back. I was supposed to have a girl back east, but this one started right then and there to put that one "out to pasture." The conversation went on something like this: "Do you live around here?"

"Yes, we have one of the foremen's houses. That one over there." She pointed across the highway. We were neighbors!

Later, Harold gave me some serious advice.

"Wyman, you should let me take you to the Methodist Church in Santa Paula next Sunday. There are lots of pretty girls there at Sunday School. If you join the choir, you'll meet lots of pretty girls."

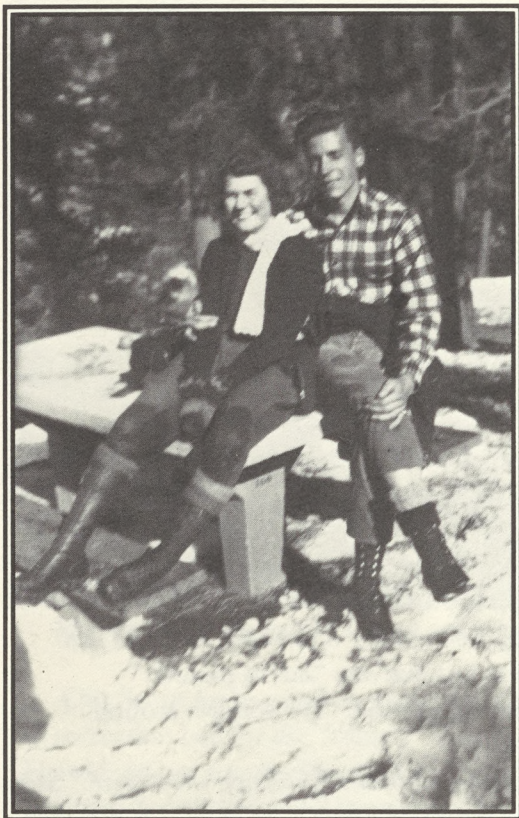
"Jesus, Harold, I don't need to meet a lot of girls!"

"Oh, Catherine Hickcox is enough!"

"C'mon! That's not what I meant! I've got to do my best here. I've got a lot to learn about this ranch!"

"You're going to inherit it, and then you'll run it someday when your uncle dies."

"Oh, I don't know about that! Maybe . . . I'm his only near relative. He hasn't any children, and with Aunt Eudora an invalid, he won't have any, I've been told."



The author and Catherine Hickcox, 1937

"Well, knowing a few people who are our neighbors around here isn't going to do you any harm."

"I guess that's so."

The next Sunday Harold drove me in to church in Santa Paula, and sure 'nough, I met lots of pretty girls and joined the choir and the Epworth League. One of the pleasant results of our attendance at the Methodist church was an invitation to the Halloween party at Elmer Outland's big red barn. It was a costume party, but what to wear? It was walnut harvest time at Rancho Sespe. Sacks, lots and lots of gunny sacks were right outside the barracks in the yard. Great! Lets go as a

couple of gunny sack goblins!

We had no idea, as we cut

armholes in the sides of the sacks and eye holes above them to see out of, that we were preparing to dress like the perpetrators of the murder of Thomas More, former owner of Rancho Sespe just over sixty years before—an event that horrified newspaper readers as far north as San Francisco, and which ultimately led to the ranch coming into the hands of my Uncle Keith and Aunt Eudora!⁶

Actually we went farther in our disguise than the famous "squatters." We sewed arms and legs onto our bodysacks. We were totally encased in stiff, pungent sacking. And was it prickly! And itchy! And KERCHOO! Sneezy!

"Harold," I said as we were trying our costumes on, "we can't drive the car like this. I can't see out good enough!"

"Well, p'raps not. You can drive. I'll sew you into your costume when we arrive."

And so it was. Elmer Outland's big red barn was all lit up with kerosene lanterns, and there were hay bales all around. And there was plenty of cider and all the girls from the church and lots of great costumes and a hay ride on a big horse-drawn wagon! What a glorious party! Harold was marvelous; he lurched and hobbled around. I tried to keep pace with him, but he was too much! He chased girls and some of the older ladies, and generally kept the party in an uproar. Until refreshment time. Then, because we hadn't cut mouth holes in our sacks, we had no choice but to unmask ourselves.

"Oh, it's you, Harold! And you, Wyman! We thought you'd come out of a haystack somewhere. You couldn't be human!"

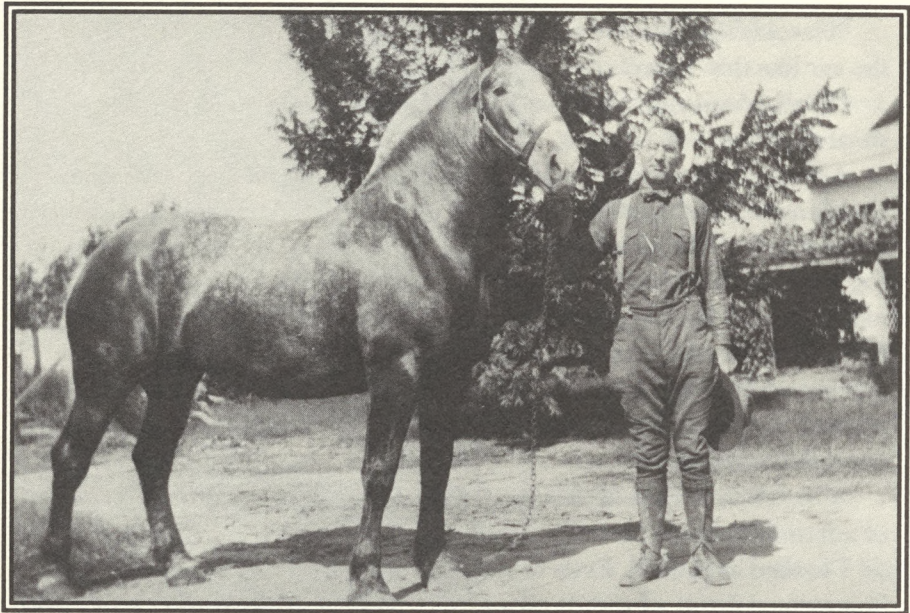
I looked at Harold. Even with the gunnysacking off, he didn't look too human, and I guess I was the same! The burlap had shed all over his hair and stuck to his flushed, perspiring face, rivulets of sweat making streaky lines through a mat of dust and hemp fibers.

"Harold, " I exploded, "you're a mess!"

"Yup," he said, "so're you!" And doubled over laughing, then rolled over into the hay, tripped me up and the two of us went back into our goblin act, rolling and snorting and hollering, "Ugh! Ugh! Yeah! Mess! Yes! Ugh! Ugh!" to the amusement of all the girls—Inge Swensen, Mildred Grainger, Beatrice Keller, Loye Milliken, Reola Maland, maybe Catherine; there were lots of others. It was a BIG party. Harold and I were a pretty good team that night. I will never forget.

I won't forget Mr. Outland, either, that wonderful big jolly, genial man. He was *the* pillar of the church, my ideal of what a California rancher should be.⁷

Before that, though, Harold and I took some of the Scouts down to the beach at "The Rincon" for a camp-out. My summer camping experiences in the East came in handy. I showed the boys how to make a bed-roll out of a blanket. Harold showed them how to make fire by friction with a "bow-drill." We cooked weenies, waded in the surf, and had a



Elmer Outland, VCMHA Collection

grand time. Walking down the beach our second day, I spotted something flopping around in the sand. It was a seagull with a broken wing.

"Look," I said to the boys, "we can save this gull. I'll bet Roy, the bird man at the ranch, can fix its wing!"

A great and noble idea! A very unusual "Good turn for the day!" But first, like the chicken in the joke about chicken-in-the-pot, you have to catch the gull. He definitely was not prepared to cooperate. After some pretty fancy hopping around, I finally managed to get both hands on him, holding both wings tightly against his body. His feet stopped thrashing and he pulled his neck in. "Nice gull," I cooed at him. "Be calm now. We're going to get you well." Since he seemed calm, I tucked him under my arm and started back to our "camp" down the beach.

Have you ever been bitten by a gull? Well, I have! It happened a couple of hundred yards from camp. Suddenly, without warning, that gull stretched his neck out and whipped around and grabbed my lower lip in his sharp beak. I don't remember how I got him loose, but I expect that I hollered pretty loud, and maybe that did it. Holding him at arm's length, I

got him to camp and then wrapped him in a towel and tied him firmly with a bunch of twine. The gull began struggling to get loose and got all twisted up in the twine. "Poor thing!" you'd say. Well, that's because you haven't been bitten by one! My lip had been bleeding pretty good, and I wasn't feeling quite so warm and friendly toward that ungrateful bird. Besides, it was a mess of knotted string and feathers. Harold agreed the situation was hopeless, so we earned our merit badge in how to put a poor wounded bird (a wild one that could really hurt you!) out of its misery. Yuk! And bury it. And then, with some of the fun taken out of our camp-out, we returned to the ranch.

Roy Bisbee, the Birdman, might not have been too pleased with our gull patient, anyway. He had a full-time job taking care of Uncle Keith and Aunt Eudora's bird collection. There were two aviaries, one on the hill and one north of "The Bend" on Sycamore Road. In them were kept lots of different kinds of mostly exotic species, but the prize, the centerpiece you might say, was a pair of huge cassowaries. Well, Roy, who resembled a cassowary in a scaled-down sort of way, had somehow managed to get this pair to breed—the first time in the world that it had been done! I remember wondering, after seeing the cassowaries with my own two eyes, up close, why in the world anyone in his right mind would want to enlarge the world's population of these really ugly and dangerous birds. Native to Australia, a mature cassowary stands over six feet tall on two of the most awesomely-clawed feet since *Tyrannosaurus Rex*! And just above the feet are these wicked eight-inch spurs, which it uses to fight with. Male or female, makes no difference, they'll just jump up and disembowel anyone they don't like. And they are notoriously bad-tempered; I believe Roy the Birdman was the only person they'd ever been recorded as liking. Roy cautioned me to stay on the outside of the heavy wire fence. His warning was not necessary. But he went into their cage and moved about quietly and they took little notice of him, while I noted the prominent horn-like crest on the two birds' heads, and how like it, in a way, was the stiff hair that crested Roy's rather pointed head.⁸ I learned that Uncle Keith had sold or traded a pair of cassowaries to William Randolph Hearst up the coast at his San Simeon castle. (Uncle Keith was acquainted with a lot of people like that.)

HORSES & HORSEMEN

There were three kinds of animals at the ranch. Work (draft) horses, mules (lots of them—they're tougher than horses) and riding horses. The man who answered to Clark Hickcox for the care, feeding, and health of the horses was John Williams. I said once to John Williams that he was a real cowboy—something like that. He set me straight right away!

"Never been around cows. Ever since I was a kid, it was horses. Just only horses. I'm a *horseman*." He said it quietly, but there was steel in his tone. I hadn't meant to insult him. I would never make that mistake again.

John Williams was, after Harold Austin, my best friend at Rancho Sespe. He was about my height (five feet eleven inches), but thin as a rail and just as lean and wiry. Gray, steady eyes you could trust, jaw that came straight out and kind of flattened at the tip. Everything about him spoke of a man in control. That's why he was so good with horses. Horses sense that. Flies would land on John's nose and walk around—into his mouth or eyes, wherever—and he wouldn't even flinch! I asked him how he could stand it.

"Got to," he answered. "Around some horses, if you make any sudden movement, you'll freak 'em. You can get yourself killed trying to swat a fly!" Now, that's a horseman!

Keith Spalding, the ranch owner, was also quite a horseman. Until late in his seventies he rode nearly every day of his life. When he was in Pasadena, where I visited him and his second wife on several occasions during the 1940s and 1950s at their spacious "cottage" back of the Huntington Hotel, he rode at the Flintridge Club. When he was at the ranch, he rode everywhere he went to see how things were coming on. He belonged to one of the most prestigious "Hunts" on the East Coast. He must have taken up equitation at an early age; both my father and Uncle Albert did, I know for sure. It was "the thing" for wealthy young men, before there were cars!



Keith Spalding in front of the "Bungalow"
Rancho Sespe

Keith was a frail youth; family tradition had it that his father, "A.G.," staked him to a herd of cows after he graduated from Yale, and Keith "threw in" with some older cattlemen and "punched cows" for a time. So he may have once been a cowboy, too. For a time he played polo. Some of his polo gear was still hanging in the riding horse stable at the ranch when I was there, but he had given it up. Why? Keith was a big man: Six foot four. No fat, just bone and muscle, probably weighed about two hundred pounds. Polo ponies are slight, dainty little mounts; he found that his bulk was hurting them. His affection for his horses was deep, so he quit playing polo and concentrated on jumping. The hunters he kept for this sport were big, powerful animals.

Uncle Keith was a horseman, but he had another reason for favoring horses: they were kinder to the earth than machines were, especially to the soil around the ranch trees. So, much of the work at the ranch, when I was there, was done by work horses: some Clydesdales, a few Percherons, but mostly Belgians, those great, big, beautiful, powerful animals that were bred long ago to be the "chargers" of the Crusaders. Uncle Keith bred Belgians. He had several brood mares that weighed in at about 3,500 pounds.

Once a vet almost lost an arm reaching into a Belgian mare to check her ovaries. He'd put a long rubber glove on up to his elbow, soaped it all up with Castile soap, and while John Williams held her halter, he'd gone swiftly in. The mare's eyes widened and she started to sit down—all 3,500 pounds of her! I rushed around into the stall and we managed to get her to stand up again, and he got his arm out. So we calmed her with some oats, and the second time it worked O.K. But it was a near thing! If she'd sat on it, she'd have snapped his arm like a twig!

Uncle Keith hated flies. With all those animals around, flies were plentiful. So I remember that there were lots of fly-traps in that stable. These were shallow pans about two feet square with two sets of electrified screens across the top. The screening was coarse enough for flies to get in, but as they wriggled past the next wire it would cook them, *Zs-s-s-t! Zs-s-s-t!* And they'd flop into the bottom of the pan. Their stinking little corpses would attract their nasty little relatives, who'd come flocking in for a family reunion: *Zs-s-s-t! Zs-s-s-t! Zs-s-s-t!* That sound, and the scorched fly smell, are imprinted on my memory of the Rancho Sespe stables.



Howard Pressey on *Dandy*, Charles Stimson on *Bruce*,
Keith Spalding on *Booze*

One day, to my surprise, Uncle Keith asked me to go riding with him. It was before the bad weather set in. I'm not sure, but I think I rode Captain, a big chestnut hunter, the finest horse I've ever been on. Captain was not as impressed with me as I was with him. However, with my uncle alongside, he made up his mind to tolerate me. He was, after all, a thoroughbred. We trotted up the road a ways and then Uncle Keith took off at a gallop between the rows of orange trees, and Captain and I followed. I was plenty scared! I'd worked in that tract; it was near the Mexican Village. The trees were so close together their branches here and there slapped our boots. There was a real danger of some kid from the village or one of the ranch hands getting run down. I was very relieved when we came to a clearing with a tree trunk lying in the middle.

"Have you done any jumping, Wyman?" Uncle Keith asked me in his big, resonant voice.

"No, Uncle Keith. Just riding trail and military-drill."

"Well, it's about time you learned. Watch me!" and he spurred his mount and soared easily over the tree trunk. "Now you do it. Keep your weight forward. Captain knows what to do."

So I spurred Captain lightly, and though the saddle slapped me unexpectedly as we cleared the tree, I thought I'd done pretty well for a first time.

"All right. Not bad. Keep your hands low. Flat back."

"Again?"

"If you wish."

So I jumped again. It wasn't a whole lot better; Captain was a big horse and his action was more powerful than any horse I had ridden before. After clearing that low hurdle, hardly a challenge for him, he was plainly irritated with me and started prancing.

"All right, boy," I said to him in a voice I hoped was too muffled for Uncle Keith to hear, "give me a little time. You've had more practice than I have."

On the way back to the stable I was astonished when Uncle Keith said to me, "Well, Wyman, you've been here long enough to have a good look at the ranch. What do you think of it?"

"It's big. Bigger than I expected." (It really was not my place to give an opinion!)

"Quite an operation, isn't it?"

"Lots of people, lots of machinery, yes."

"Do you think it is run well?" With that question I darn near fell off my horse! What would Mr. Pressey or Mr. Lombard think if they knew my uncle had asked me that?

"Oh yes, on the whole. Uh, I suppose it's the best-run ranch around here...of course, I haven't seen any of the others. I mean I don't know how they are run."

What could I say? I had been at the ranch long enough to have heard lots of things. At age nineteen I was too inexperienced to sort out the facts, and I was only sure of one thing: Rancho Sespe was my employer, paying me a modest but satisfactory wage, and was doing the same for several hundred people at a time when unemployment and agricultural disaster had brought most of the nation to its knees. When we unsaddled our horses at the stable and I said good-bye to my uncle, I was troubled.

If he picked up on it, Uncle Keith gave no indication of it. But it was the last time I was to have a pleasant visit with him at the ranch.

SHAKING WALNUTS AND WHATEVER

When walnut season came on, most of the men in the barracks were put to "shaking." For anyone who hasn't done this, a few words of description may be a good idea. The walnut trees at Rancho Sespe covered forty to eighty acres, maybe more. They were big, mature monarchs of the nut tree family, well spaced and pruned, mostly topping off about sixty feet above the fairly smooth cultivated ground. There was a scarred ring around their trunks a few feet above the ground where, as seedlings, they'd been grafted to fresh-cut stumps of black walnuts. Our superb walnuts were all "soft-shell." When ripe, the nuts were encased in thick, pulpy, green "hulls" almost as big as tennis balls. Some came down of their own weight, and of some of those a few cracked their hulls, so you could pick great big costly walnuts right up off the ground. Naturally curious, I did this and discovered that the meat was uncrisp and didn't taste good. I was to learn, the hard way, what it took to market soft-shell premium walnuts.

First the walnuts had to be gotten out of the trees. Crews of men (strong men) were sent into the groves on trucks. Once there, they would off-load heavy, hardwood poles, about a dozen to each row, leaving a half-dozen men with them to work that row. There were short poles for the lower branches and long ones for the upper branches. Sturdy iron hooks were attached to the upper ends of these poles; twenty-footers for the short ones, forty for the long ones. I'll never forget those long poles! They must have weighed over fifty pounds. At first, I couldn't even get mine up off the ground! Bob Pauley showed me how to stick my left foot as far out as I could, grabbing the pole and shoving the bottom end under my left foot, reaching as far as I could away from there with my right hand and lifting with all my might! The twenty-footers were easy enough, but those forty-footers were murder. At least, they were for a 150-pound nineteen-year-old. And once the pole was up, it had to be maneuvered into the branches of the tree, which nature had arranged in a way to block every access to the branch one wanted to shake. So after lots of cussing and

puffing, I began to get the hang of it, but it was hard to keep up with the experienced hands at first. I'm not by nature a quitter, but I remember coming close to throwing in the sponge that first day. The reward for a "good shake" was a shower of those green blobs. When they hit you, they didn't really hurt, but they sure got your attention! Which was all day long, for ten hours. "Shaking walnuts" was one of the jobs that left me shaking long after supper time.

Maybe Ed Spraggins noticed I was getting worn out. I don't know. I was put on the "huller" for a few days. This was a primitive machine that scraped the green hulls off the walnuts, the ones that weren't ripe enough to just shed them naturally. Some of the boys worked the huller without rubber gloves. Their hands were dyed a deep, deep walnut brown. I wore gloves. I distrusted that dyeing process. The walnuts were soaked with water as they got picked up on the conveyor belt and fed into the flat wire scrapers. When they were clean, they were all set out on flats in the yard to dry out in the sun. The huller was in the blacksmith shed, and the flats stretched out on the ground over toward the corral, across the yard, dozens of them.

Uncle Keith had sent my family boxes of walnuts at Christmas time in the years back when my folks were still living together in Bronxville, New York. It was like he sent us some "California sunshine." It had been my first introduction to Rancho Sespe (the ranch was calling me). Now I was at Rancho Sespe. For Christmas of 1937 I sent boxes of walnuts to my favorite relatives back east. I painted Christmas trees on them. And the walnuts were special, too! I hadn't grown them, but I'd done everything else! (If you detect a note of pride, here, you're dead right! I am proud to have been, even for a very short time, one of the people who raise and market the food this hungry nation feeds on!)

I was proud of it then, to be a "regular hand" at Rancho Sespe. But something was going wrong. I kept being put on less and less important jobs. One of them was special work, though.

The management at Rancho Sespe kept track of the productivity of each of its trees. The orchards were carefully monitored. Trees that didn't produce had to be "terminated"! "Short" Alford, a really small, very wiry kid only a couple of years older than I, showed me how to do it. (Part of the job had already been done.) We were deposited in one of the upper

tracts, a lemon orchard, where a number of unproductive trees had been cut off about three feet above ground, and only their bare trunks were showing. We were to dig out the stumps. Our tools were a long-handled shovel and a mattock.

I had never seen a mattock before. Pick-axes, yes (in the hands of immigrant ditch-diggers on the East Coast). Mattocks are really exaggerations of the pick-ax, with the pointed end flattened into a narrow ax head, and the narrow, flat end of the pick-ax widened to a narrow, heavy hoe. "Short" had to show me how to use it. What we had to do was plot out the hole we were going to dig with the mattock handle (which was a yard long), dig a three-foot-wide hole, three feet deep, yank out the stump, then put the top foot of "sweet," aerated dirt in the bottom of the hole, and throw the sour remainder on top to fill the hole back up. Right away, I discovered I couldn't just dig in with my shovel. There is a web of tough roots down there and I had to chop those out with my mattock. It took me most of the first morning to wrestle my way three feet deep around my stump, and when I chopped the taproot and pulled it out, my hole was NOT round. During the time of my travail, Short had dug out three stumps and there were three perfectly round patches of fresh, filled-in soil where he'd been working. I was fit to be tied. "Y'all oughtn't to fret y'self, Wyman," he said. "Shucks, I's born with a shovel in my hands. I learned it 'fore I learned to read. 'Sides I'm cut close to th' ground—don't have's fer to go's you! And 'course I fit in the hole better'n you!" And he showed me how to "get onto my shovel" with my thigh doing the shoving. It helped, but he still dug about ten stumps a day to my six. Once again, I'd come in at the end of the day, hands trembling with fatigue, sometimes trembling all over.

Well, the fact is, I wasn't "cutting the mustard," as Allen Lombard put it. So, I was put on "numbering trees." It was late fall, now. Mornings were real brisk—icy sometimes. I'd be dropped off alone in a tract with a gunny sack, a thin artist's brush, and a pot of white lead. I'd crawl under tree number one, shivering from the ride in the truck bed, scrub the trunk clean with the sack, then paint on the numbers. The numbers had to be about three inches high; the row number on top of the tree number. Then crawl out, stretch, maybe jump up and down to get the blood circulating, then crawl under again—not the next tree—I was supposed to

number *every other* tree. My first tree was numbered 1/1. The next number was 1/3. And so on till the end of the row. By about ten o'clock in the morning, the sun would have warmed up the air pretty good, so by this time I was carrying my denim jacket, too, till I could get back to a tree by the road where I could stash it with my bag lunch. And I'd have gotten a good snootful of bits of sacking, silt, lime-sulphur, and other chemicals that had been sprayed on the trees in recent years. I'd get pretty warm. My nose would quit running. Both it and my mouth would dry up. My eyes were smarting from the chemicals and stuff. I'd stretch and look around. If it looked like I was alone, I'd "take five." I might stand up for a few minutes to stretch and "get the kinks out."

One day a little stink bug tried to make a trail under my elbow—the one I had to lean on because my back ached from crouching. I flicked him onto his shiny black back with my paint brush. He struggled and flipped back on his feet, then he immediately raised up his little pointy ass and made a bad smell. (Like lime-sulphur, only worse!)

"Hey, fella! That's not polite! You looking for trouble?" I reached down, picked him up, and painted his back white. Then I turned him loose and went back to my numbers. I can't say how often this scenario was repeated, but it was plenty. There were a lot of those stiff-legged little stiffs in the Rancho Sespe orchards that year.

A year later, when I was at Ventura Junior College, one of my friends there said to me, "Hey, Wyman, you were at Rancho Sespé before, weren't you?"

"Yes, I was."

"Did you hear what they found out there? It was in the paper yesterday."

"No, what?"

"Albino stink bugs. The paper says it's some kind of biological freak. They've been finding a bunch of them!"

"No kidding!" (Ain't nature wonderful, though!)

One day the heat rose considerably and became oppressive early in the afternoon. Maybe I'd been at choir practice the night before. Or I might have stayed up late absorbed by *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise* by J. Ross Browne, a rare leather-bound original I found among the "penny-dreadfuls" in the bookcase of our lounge in the barracks.⁹ (It had the

bookplate of Uncle Keith's yacht, the *Goodwill* in it.) I was, that afternoon, overcome with sleepiness and boredom. I lay back, but only for a moment. Suddenly I woke up. Mr. Lombard was standing over me. He was not smiling. "Asleep on the job," he said. It was as if he were pronouncing my death sentence. "It looks like we can't trust you to do even the easiest work here on the ranch."

I don't know what I answered. But I was mortified. If I had known what I know now, I should have walked into the office and demanded my check. But I stuck it out. I felt honor-bound to stick it out. I'm glad I did. Some of the best lessons are learned from failures.

CHRISTMAS AT RANCHO SESPE

The Christmas season was upon us. There was a tinsel tree in the "rec room" and the Hardys put up decorations in the dining room. At the Methodist Episcopal Church in Santa Paula (where I'd become active in the Epworth League and the choir) a play was in the last stages of rehearsal. Perhaps because I had been in plays at school, I was cast in the title role of "The Other Shepherd." This very sentimental story centered on a shepherd of Bethlehem who missed seeing the infant Jesus because he was out in the hills rescuing a poor little lost lamb. I told our friends at the church I would provide the lamb, also some background music. (I would play the music when I was offstage on a rare little wooden recorder I'd bought two summers before.) Harold Austin said I could probably get a lamb at the Saugus Ranch. So we drove over there, back a little ways from where Magic Mountain is now, and we came on the sheep herders and their flocks. The herders were all Basque, and a couple of them spoke English well enough to understand what we wanted and to let us know right off that, yes, we could have a lamb for free. The ewes had been dropping lambs liberally, some of them either unable to care for their young, or dying in the birthing, so there were a dozen lambs that couldn't be paired with a ewe. They would die. Some had been saved by rubbing a stillborn lamb on them so the bereaved ewe would accept the orphan, but the one that Harold held in his arms as we drove back to Sespe would have been a goner if we hadn't taken it.

So I tethered the lamb in the barracks basement after feeding it milk that Noel Hardy gave me in an old wine bottle with a big vet's nipple on it. Then I went upstairs to bed. I had barely closed my eyes when I heard this noise coming up from two stories below: Ba-a-a-a-, Ba-a-a-a—a-a-a! At first I thought, Oh, what the heck . . . it'll get tired and go to sleep." But, no, it got louder. Cheese! It had a nice bed of gunny sacks down there! Ungrateful little bugger! Then the ax fell. The other guys up there on the same floor with me started hollering, "Who the h— brung a lamb in here! What the —— is a lamb doing in here, anyway! Etc."

"O.K." I hollered. "My fault! I'll quiet it down!" So I went down with my flashlight—no way was I going to spend the whole night down there—and brought it up into my cubicle, fixed the gunny sack bed up next to mine and, giving the little guy a few more pulls on the bottle, climbed back in bed. The lamb was quiet for about twenty minutes. I was just dropping off to sleep, when I heard a disquieting noise a few inches below my pillow. "Oh gosh!" I thought, "do I have any newspapers?" Yep, I had, and as I was spreading them around the floor the lamb started Ba-a-ing again. More nursing. Hey! I can't keep this up all night! So I wrapped the little fellow up in the remaining clean gunny sacks, and wrapped that bundle in my raincoat, and stuffed it and myself back into my bed. And every time that lamb got thirsty, which was about every twenty minutes, it got fed. What happened in between, you already guessed. And it didn't include much shut-eye for me. Fortunately, the next day was Sunday, and the play was in the evening, so although that lamb was going to provide realism by itself, I was fully prepared, myself, to represent a shepherd dog-tired from fetching the lamb. From "mothering" that lamb. *And* from cleaning up my "diggings" in the barracks!

Now the lamb in the play was supposed to have a broken leg. No! I couldn't go that far to get realism! But what I did was to tie that lamb up very gently while it was sleeping after a feeding "backstage" (choir room). Then I played a very old Auvergne refrain on my recorder and took him on-stage for the final scene. I had timed it before, so I was sure we'd finish the play before the lamb woke up and did his you-know-what. BUT at the crucial moment, when I started the curtain line, "I thank thee God..." with my arms upraised, I saw out of the corner of my eye, my little lamb shaking off his bonds and climbing up on his little hooves. And

as I said "for making me, like Thyself, a shepherd!" that little b—"staled," just missing my foot, right there in front of the altar, God, and the whole congregation!

God forgave him, of course. But why should I? I was sure he'd stolen my big scene! No, apparently not. Believe it or not, nobody in the "house" had noticed, and the play was considered a great success, especially that cute little lamb!

Harry Forbes agreed to take the lamb as a pet for his daughter. Their house was next door to the Hickcoxes. Three months later, the family had it for Easter dinner. (I, a city-bred boy, found that beyond comprehension!) Harry was our ranch scientist, in charge of the lab and all experimental work. I liked Harry. He invited me into the lab one day and showed me how he tested soil samples to tell when and where to irrigate and fertilize, and he lent me some government publications on citriculture. But by this time I needed no further convincing. Growing and marketing oranges, lemons, and limes was a very complicated and demanding business. It was no place for "amateurs!"

THE RANCH AND I PART COMPANY

A few years ago, on my way back to my home in San Francisco from a visit in Los Angeles, I stopped at the entrance of the office of the ranch, set the brake on my Honda, and walked in. Facing me from across the counter were the faces of the same wonderful women I had known years ago. I introduced myself. "Why, of course," was the response, "I thought I recognized you! Mr. Lombard is in his office. I'm sure he will want to see you!"

For years, ever since my Uncle Keith Spalding rode up on his fine horse on a gray, dreary day in January 1938, and fired me, I had kept a knot of resentment deep in my gut against Allen Lombard. It was his reports to my uncle about my work at the ranch that had given Uncle Keith the idea that I had been "malingering." But when Allen Lombard appeared at the door of his office, a small wrinkled Northern Italian in his late seventies or early eighties smiling at me, I was completely disarmed. We conversed briefly about the ranch and about my career, in both the military and in public school teaching. Then I came to the point of my

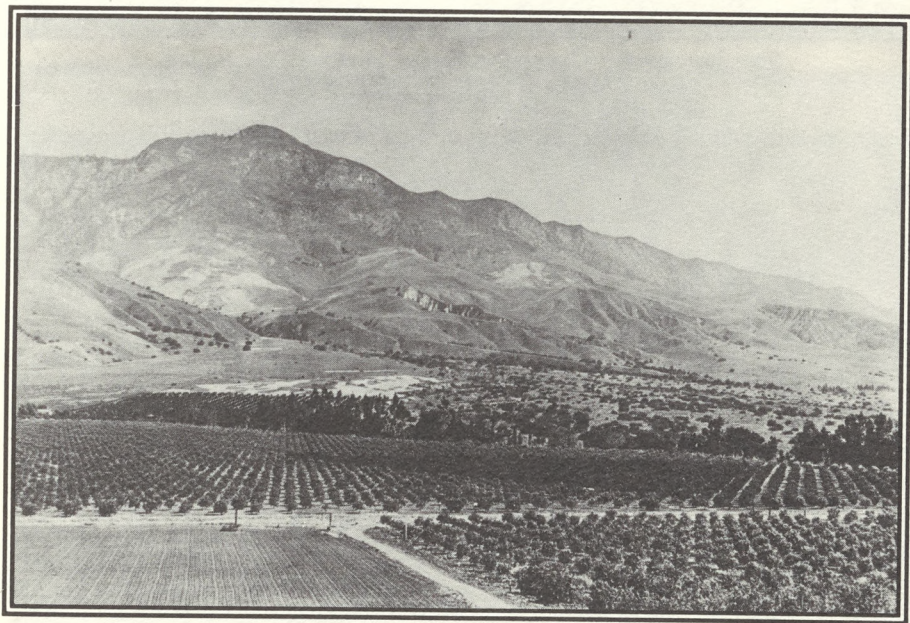
visit: I wondered how I might find an orange crate label to frame and put up on the wall of my home in San Francisco as a memento of the ranch. Mr. Lombard went over to a small closet in the corner of his office, opened it, and pulled out a sheaf of tattered labels. "When we closed the packing house," he explained, "a big bundle of these labels was taken down to the river and buried. Recently, to prevent the river from overflowing the lower orchards, we had a bulldozer digging a deeper channel, and it dug up the bundle. The ones in the center were still pretty much intact! Here, have one!" And he peeled one off and handed it to me. I was struck, again, as I had been that summer of 1937 when I first met Allen Lombard, how much smaller than I he was. For years I had harbored a desire to lay a few good punches on his jaw. Quite suddenly he asked me, "Why did you leave the ranch, Wyman?" Sure enough, he had forgotten! And without a moment of reflection I replied then and there, "Because you and Mr. Pressey didn't have any use for me." It was a response that was completely different from what I might have intended through the half-century that had passed us both by. And it had a double meaning, but both meanings were true. On this occasion, I believe, Allen Lombard took it to mean the one I preferred him to take: that I was, at the age of nineteen in the summer of 1937, a completely hopeless greenhorn, willing and eager to please, but by education, temperament, and aptitude, unfit for ranching, and could not have come up to their expectations as an employee at Rancho Sespe.

THE NEARLY HALF-YEAR I SPENT AT RANCHO SESPE IN 1937-38 was my first job. From that I went right into spraying and leptomastic insecticide work at the Associates Insectary in Santa Paula. I was pleased to get Willard Beckley's professional opinion that I was very good at spraying.

When the bad weather of that wet winter laid us boys off at the Insectary, I had gone to work for Harry Bostwick at the Santa Paula *Chronicle*, composing and selling ads up and down Santa Paula's Main Street. Then, for the year that I was at Ventura Junior College, I worked as doorman of the Glen City Theater for Donald Austin. At VJC I was in both "The Fool" and "The Firefly," following the bent that led to my being offered a contract at 20th Century-Fox in the fall of 1941. But the Army got me be-

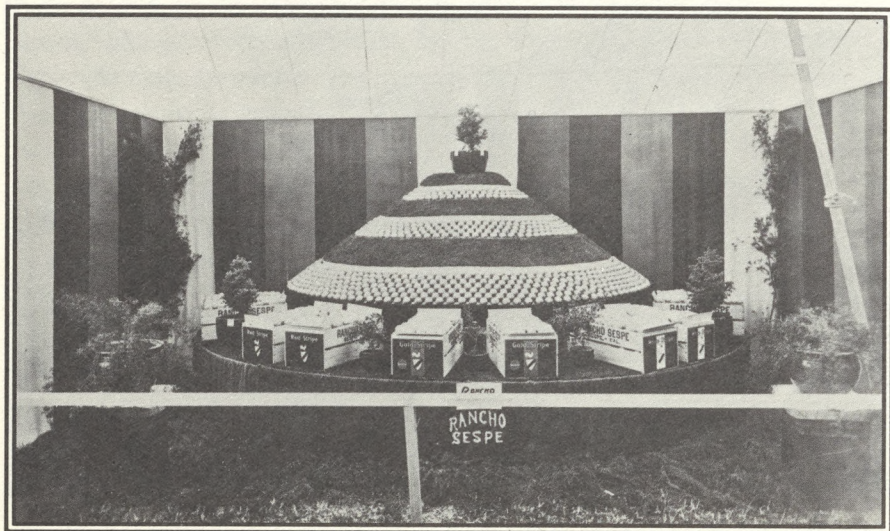
fore I could make a picture, and I flew for the Army Air Force all through the war. Four years later, I looked for work again in Hollywood while studying at the University of California, Los Angeles. After many "near-misses" in all the big studios and a few small ones in Hollywood, I started teaching—the last twenty-one years in San Francisco. In retirement, from both teaching and the Army Reserve, I am active in historical research and was, until recently, a frequent guide at the San Francisco Presidio Army Museum and at Fort Point (which in earlier days guarded the Golden Gate).

In 1992 I moved from San Francisco to Santa Paula to marry my Ventura Junior College schoolmate, Betty Taylor Onstot. The "greenhorn" is a greenhorn no longer, and Rancho Sespe is disappearing from the map. But the memories linger on. I was lucky to be there when it was at its peak!





Sixty-horespower Caterpillar tractor. Howard Pressey, left,
C.A. Hickcox, center



Rancho Sespe exhibit at Ventura County Fair c1920



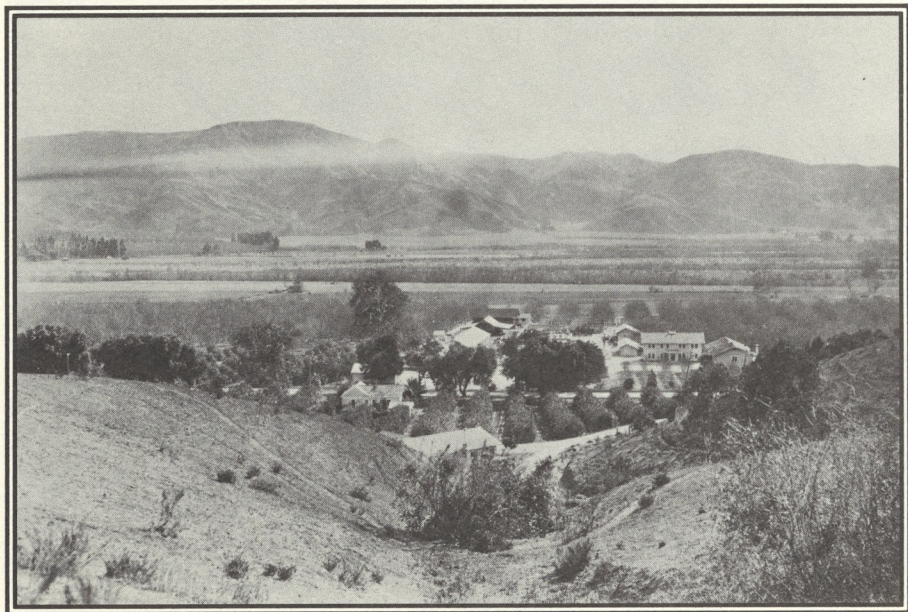
Packing House, Rancho Sespe



"The Yard"



Aerial view Rancho Sespe, January 1935



Rancho Sespe, spring 1925

Notes

¹Howard Fay Pressey served as manager of Rancho Sespe from 1918 to 1945. Born in Santa Paula in 1889, he attended Pomona College and later graduated from the University of California with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1911. That same year, he was employed by Rancho Sespe. In September 1917 he "entered the service of his country and underwent training at Camp Lewis, where he received a lieutenant's commission. He was discharged in December 1918." Pressey replaced Walter H. Fleet who had served as manager from 1910 and had earlier been associated with the Southern Pacific Railroad Company in Los Angeles County and later the Piru Oil and Land Company. The first oranges, lemons and walnuts were planted in 1908. See J.M. Guinn, "W.H. Fleet," *Historical and Biographical Record of Southern California...* (Chicago: Chapman Publishing Company, 1902), 1106-1107; Sol N. Sheridan, "Howard Fay Pressey," *History of Ventura County, California* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1926), 293-294; Kenneth K. Glenn, "History of Rancho Sespe, 1888 to 1988," *Fillmore 1888-1988* (Fillmore: Fillmore Centennial Committee, Fillmore Historical Society, 1988), 190; C.M. Gidney, "Walter H. Fleet," *History of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties, California* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1917). Editor's note, hereafter *EN*.

²Thomas Allen Lombard was manager of Rancho Sespe from 1947 to 1979. Born in 1901 in Lugano, Switzerland, this son of a concert conductor traveled all over the world and was fluent in five languages. After receiving a degree as an agronomist at the Swiss Agricultural Institute, Lombard accepted an invitation to come to Rancho Sespe in 1922. Following his death in 1983, a scholarship fund was established in his name at the California Institute of Technology. See Wally Smith, "The Much Traveled Thomas Allen Lombard," *Ventura Star-Free Press*, January 13, 1974, Profile section, 4-6; Glenn, 189-192. *EN*

³Lyman Pressey, now retired, lives in Fresno, California.

⁴"Sespe Village" fell on hard times after farm labor organizers came in the 1940s and the ranch management evicted all the old families. Glad I wasn't at the ranch to witness that!

⁵Clark Hickcox also managed cultivation, preparation of the land, planting of crops, beans, hay, etc. and harvesting them. And, he was the buyer and seller of the Belgians, especially. Budweiser's wagon was pulled by Rancho Sespe horses in the early days. He retired, at age 65, in 1945 and died on December 28, 1959 in Pasadena, California.

Notes

⁶For a history of Rancho Sespe see Robert G. Cleland, *The Place called Sespe* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1957). The murder of Thomas More is chronicled in Charles Outland, *Sespe Gunsmoke: An Epic Case of Rancher versus Squatters* (Glendale and Ventura: Arthur H. Clark and The Ventura County Museum of History & Art, 1991).

⁷Born in Rockville, Indiana, Elmer G. Outland came to San Francisco in 1901 to work for the Santa Fe Railroad Company. In 1903 he moved to Santa Paula and later married Santa Paula native Stella M. Faulkner. They had four children: George, Lawrence, Charles and Esther (see preceding note). Elmer Outland died September 23, 1946. *EN*

⁸Roy Lee Bisbee died September 5, 1984.

⁹John Ross Browne (1821-1875), *Etchings of a Whaling Cruise: With Notes of a Sojourn on the Island of Zanzibar, and a Brief History of the Whale Fishing in its Past and Present Condition* (London: J. Murray, 1846). *EN*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

EDWARD WYMAN SPALDING was born in New York City on June 8, 1918. His father, Boardman Spalding, was an executive with the family sporting goods business, A.G. Spalding & Bros.. After attending schools in Bronxville and Riverdale, New York, Spalding spent two years at school in Florence, Italy. During vacations he bicycled over much of Western Europe, crossing the Alps twice. On his return to the United States, he spent a year at Yale, after which he traveled to California for his first job. *A Greenhorn At Rancho Sespe* is Spalding's recollection, fifty-six years later, of that experience.

As a youth of nineteen, Spalding had already worn the uniform of the U.S. Army Field Artillery, trained "remounts" (fresh horses) at Yale, and then transferred to the Naval R.O.T.C. performing on the special drill team (bayonet drill) and cruised on the *U.S.S. Oscar Badger* (DD 126) in the Caribbean. Spalding acted in a number of plays, including one in the Italian language at Yale. And, he had been in the air once—at Newark Airport when it was still a dirt field.

Since his first visit to Ventura County (1937-1939), where he attended Ventura Junior College and played roles in "The Firefly" and "The Fool," Spalding spent twenty-five years teaching at all levels, has been both an Army and Air Force pilot (present rank LTC USAR, Retired), has been involved in several hundred shows as actor, director and designer (some of them at the University of California, Los Angeles, where Spalding obtained his degree after World War II).

Retired from the San Francisco Unified School District, Wyman Spalding served as a volunteer guide at the San Francisco Presidio Army Museum and the National Park Service historical site Fort Point. Currently, he and his wife, Betty, are busy members in the choir at the First United Methodist Church in Santa Paula.

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Questions concerning matters of style should be resolved by referring to the *University of Chicago Press Manual of Style* (13th edition). While articles in any form or style may be considered for publication (articles on computer disk are especially welcome), the Quarterly Advisory Committee reserves the right to return accepted manuscripts for necessary changes. Manuscripts submitted for consideration must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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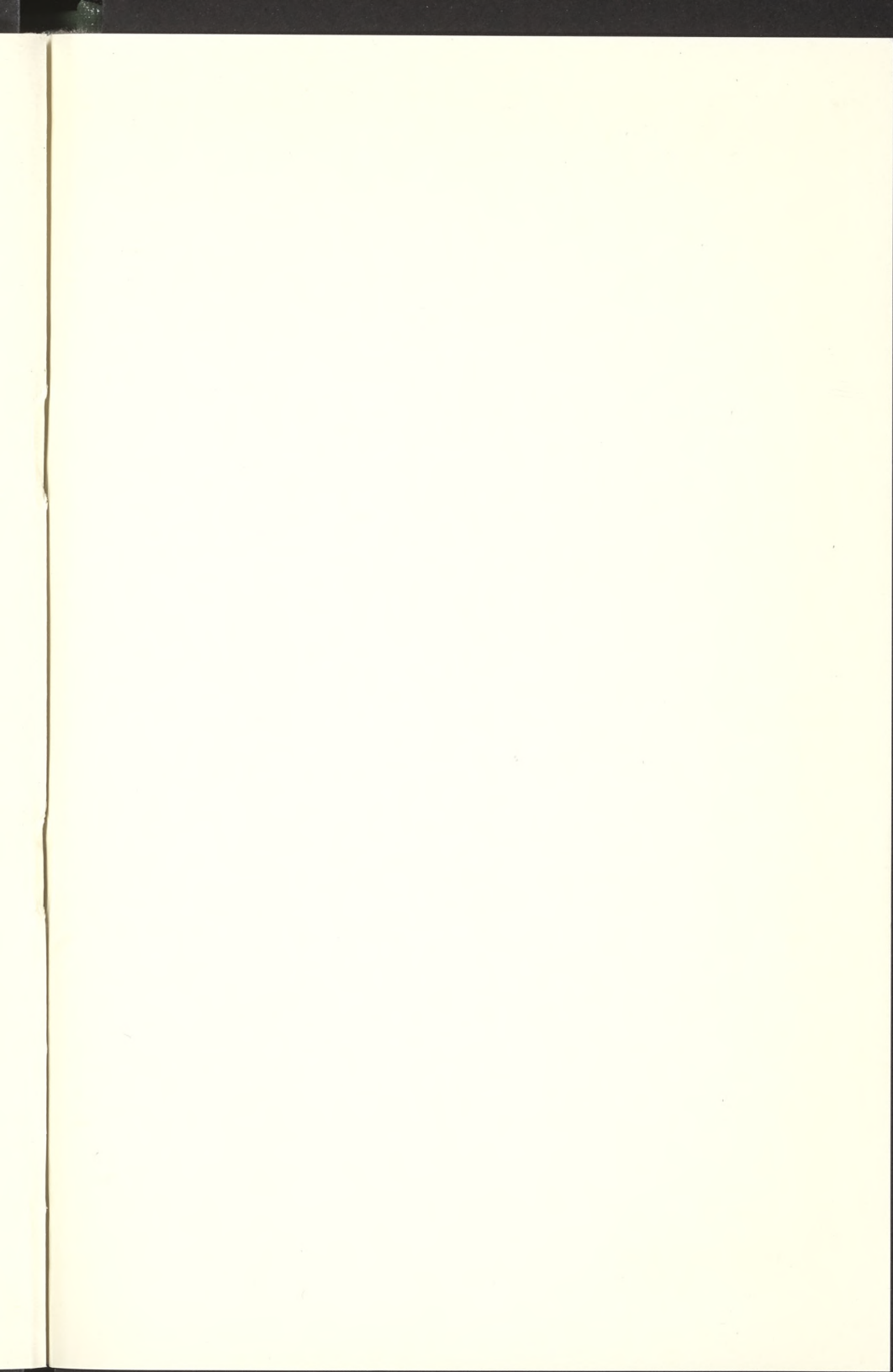
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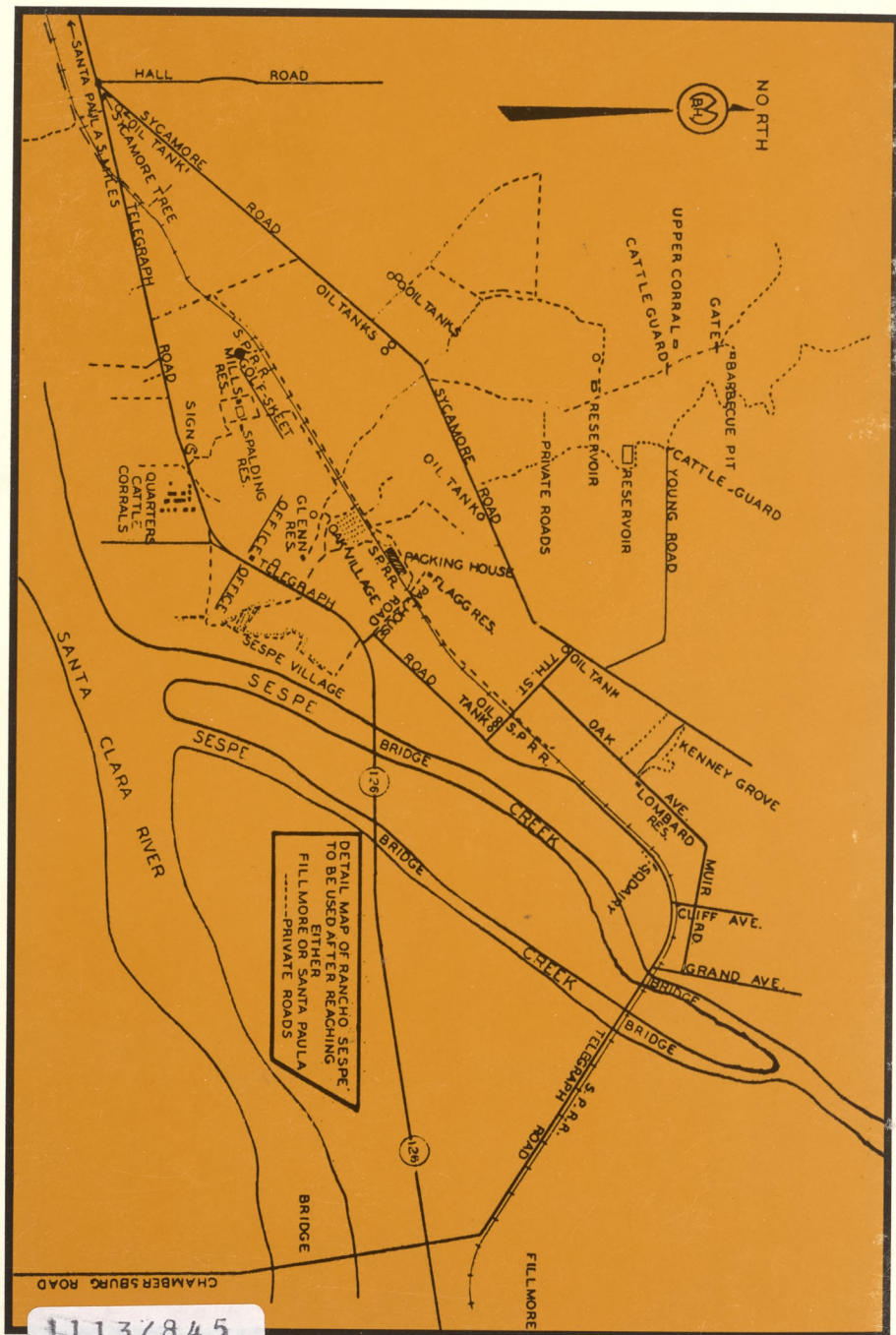
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